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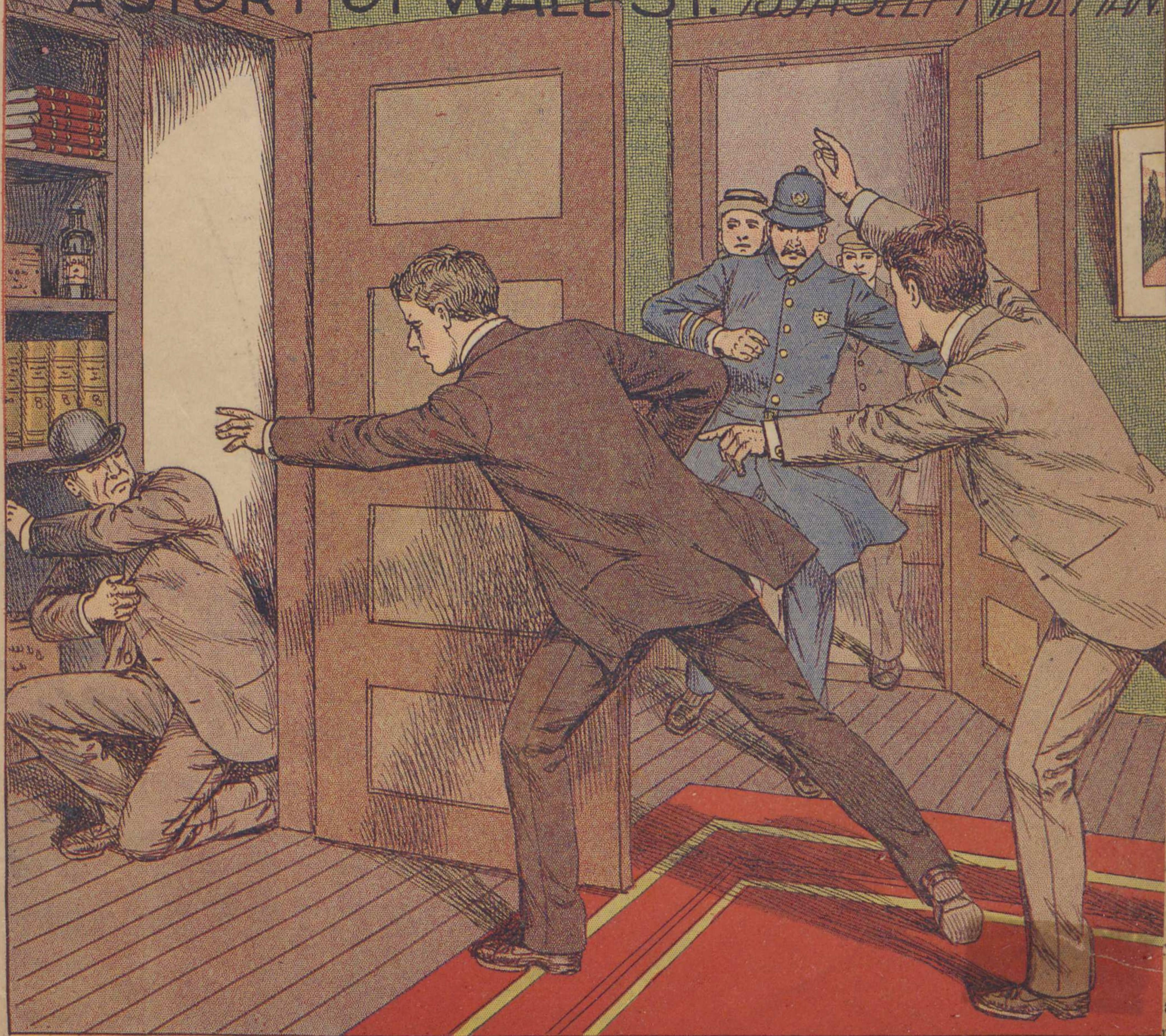
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FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

WINNING BY PLUCK
OR THE DEALS THAT MADE THE DOLLARS
A STORY OF WALL ST. By A SELF MADE MAN



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Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

JWA

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WINNING BY PLUCK

OR,

THE DEALS THAT MADE THE DOLLARS

(A STORY OF WALL STREET)

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

WHAT NICK FISHED OUT OF JAMAICA BAY.

"Say, Roger, do you know what a paradox is?" asked Nick Norton, as he flung his line into the water from a boat in Jamaica Bay, where he and his friend, Roger Sherwood, both Wall Street messengers, were fishing one Saturday afternoon.

"I couldn't give you the dictionary definition, for I don't carry a pocket Webster in my clothes; but my general idea of a paradox is that it is something contradictory," replied Roger.

"That covers the ground near enough. I couldn't give any better explanation of the word myself off-hand. It is something which in appearance and language is absurd, and yet is true, in fact. Practically I'm a paradox myself at this moment."

"How's that?" asked Roger, as he pulled in a fish.

"Because I'm both lucky and unlucky at the same time."

"How can you be both lucky and unlucky at the same time? That's a manifest absurdity. You must be either one or the other."

"I tell you I'm both," persisted Nick.

"How do you make it out?"

"I'm lucky because this morning I got hold of an A1 copper-bottomed tip that's a sure winner; and I'm unlucky because I haven't funds enough to take advantage of it—see?"

"Yes, I see. What's the tip?"

"Will it do you any good to know?"

"How?"

"Have you got the coin to back it? Can you buy even five shares of any stock on the usual margin?"

"Yes, I can buy ten shares."

"Then you have \$100 that you can call on?"

"I have."

"You are \$80 better off than me. Take that \$100 and put it up on A. & B. the first chance you get on Monday."

"That's the stock you've got the tip on?"

"Yes."

"What did you learn about it?"

"That Lampson and his bunch of capitalists have taken hold of it, and as soon as they have got a good grip on the shares they're going to boom it as high as they can push it."

"How did you get on to that fact?"

"I'm not saying how I got on to it, but you can depend on it that I'm giving you no ringer. Inside of two weeks you'll see that things will come out just as I'm giving them to you. If I had \$10,000, and it was all the money I owned in the world, I'd back A. & B. with it, and I'd expect to more than double my money."

At that moment Roger had another bite and landed another fish—a beauty.

"Why don't you get something, Nick?" he said. "I've caught two since you put your line overboard. Get busy."

"No, it's the fish that should get busy."

"Maybe there's something wrong with your bait."

Nick waited a few minutes longer and then started to pull in his line.

He met with considerable resistance.

"What's the matter, Dick? Caught a whale?" grinned Roger.

"Feels as if I'd hooked on to the bottom of Jamaica Bay. I'm afraid I'll lose my hooks and a part of my line," replied

Nick. "Pull the boat over that way a bit and maybe I can get my line free."

Roger put out an oar and worked the boat over.

Nick gave his line a quick jerk and up it came, but the weight told him that he had hooked something heavier than a fish of the kind they were getting.

It proved to be a small branch of a tree.

"If you keep on you may get the rest of the tree," laughed Roger.

Nick said nothing, but proceeded to disentangle his hooks.

While he was thus engaged he saw something lodged in the crotch of the limb.

He pulled the foreign object off and discovered that it was a pocketbook.

It was not a lean pocketbook, either, though its rotundity might have been caused by the swelling of the material in the water.

"See what came up with the branch," said Nick, showing the wallet to his companion.

"Gee! You don't say. Open it and see what's inside. Maybe there's a \$1,000 bill."

"Will you bet there is?"

"Hardly. I'll bet you a quarter that there isn't more than a dollar altogether in it."

"Well, I'm sport enough to take you up, though I doubt if there's any money in it. Produce your quarter."

Roger did so.

Nick then opened the water-soaked wallet, whereupon a wad of bills was disclosed.

"Holy smoke!" ejaculated Roger, as he gazed open-mouthed at the money.

The roll was so mushy that Nick was afraid to handle them lest it should come apart in pieces.

He took it out gingerly, squeezed the excess of water out of it and laid it on the seat beside him in the sunshine.

The outside bill was a yellow-back, which proved that it must be at least a \$20 note.

"This is better than all the fish in the bay," he said. That reminds me that you've lost your bet," and he pocketed two quarters.

"You're lucky for fair," said Roger, enviously.

"I wonder if I can find out who the pocketbook and the money belongs to?"

"What do you care? It's your property now."

"Not if I can find a clue to the owner."

"Why not? If I'd pulled it out of the bay I wouldn't worry about who lost it. It's a fair case of findings keepings."

Nick examined the wallet closely, but though it contained various memoranda, there was nothing that threw the slightest light on the identity of the party who lost it.

He laid it out to dry, too, but he didn't feel much like going on with his sport.

He sat and watched the roll of wet bills, wondering how much it amounted to.

"You've ceased to be a paradox, for you've got enough money now to back your tip," said Roger.

Nick hadn't thought of that, and his companion's remark raised a vision of unexpected wealth before his mind's eye.

"It will take a lot of heat to make it safe to handle that wad," he said.

"It isn't four yet. The roll ought to be fairly dry by the time we reach shore," said Roger.

"Would you give your \$100 for that roll as it stands?"

"I might. It looks as if there was a good deal more than \$100 there. Would you take \$100 for it?"

"No. I don't think I'd take less than \$500."

"Aren't you going to fish any more?"

"I'm more interested in the roll."

"But you might as well keep on fishing while the roll is drying."

Nick was in no hurry to resume, but after awhile he re-baited his hooks and threw his line in again.

He caught a fish almost immediately.

Half an hour passed and the boy had secured about thirty fish between them.

Then Nick stopped and picked up the roll of money.

He was able to open it far enough to see that the yellow bill was a \$50 one.

He didn't dare pursue his investigations further until the money had dried out more.

He turned the wallet over so it could dry on the other side.

So the afternoon passed away, and they decided that it was time to return to the landing place where they had hired the boat.

Nick tried the roll again and was able to partially detach one end of the yellow-back.

That revealed a second yellow bill of the same denomination.

"Maybe they're all fifties?" said Roger, feeling that luck had certainly hovered over Nick that afternoon.

"So much the better for me. I don't care how much there's here; it will all go on A. & B. Monday morning."

"If you have that much confidence in your tip, I might as well risk my \$100."

"You won't regret it if you do, but you will if you don't."

When they got close in shore Nick returned the money to the wallet and put it in his pocket, intending to dry the money thoroughly in his mother's gas oven at home.

With a string of fish each they left the landing and walked to the station to take a train that would carry them, via the East New York junction, to the Brooklyn Bridge.

CHAPTER II.

SPOILING A CROOKED JOB.

The train was not in and they had to wait.

The man in charge of the station said it was not due for half an hour, and it would remain there half an hour before it started.

"That's an hour we've got to loaf around here," said Roger.

"Let's go over to that little restaurant and get a bite?" suggested Nick.

Roger made no objection, for he was hungry, and they

spent twenty minutes in the place, taking the edge off their appetites, which were keen after their afternoon's sport on the bay.

As they were paying the cashier, who was the proprietor, Nick happened to glance out of a side window.

A well-dressed man was dozing in a chair outside on the side of the building.

Nick saw two tough-looking youths abstracting his watch and chain and a roll of bills from his vest pocket.

"Look!" he exclaimed, grabbing Roger by the arm. "Look at that."

Roger looked and uttered a gasp.

"Well, if they haven't a nerve," he ejaculated.

"Follow me. We must put a spoke in that game," said Nick, making a rush out of the door, with his friend at his heels.

The toughs had accomplished their object and were walking off with their plunder.

"Hold on, Roger," said Nick; "if they see that we're after them they'll probably lead us a chase. They are making for that old shanty yonder. We'll watch them."

The two rascals presently disappeared inside of the shack, where they doubtless intended to divide the stolen money.

"Keep your eye on the place," said Nick; "I'm going to arouse the gentleman."

Nick walked up to the sleeper and shook him.

"Eh? What's the matter? Has the train come in?" said the man, straightening himself in the chair.

"Not yet; but you've just been robbed."

"What's that? Robbed!"

He felt for his watch and his money, and found both gone.

He uttered an ejaculation of dismay.

"Where is the thief?" he cried jumping on his feet.

"There are two of them, tough young fellows, and they've gone over in that shanty to hide," said Nick, pointing toward the shack.

"They must be arrested."

"I have a friend with me. The three of us ought to be able to handle them without any other assistance. I guess there aren't any policemen around here."

"The scoundrels!" cried the gentleman. "You saw them rob me?"

"Yes, we were in the restaurant and saw the whole thing through the window. We rushed out to stop them, but they had got away with your property and were walking toward the shanty. We might have run after them, but I thought it was better to let them take shelter in the shack, awaken you, and then the three of us could tackle them to better advantage," said Nick.

"You were sensible," replied the gentleman. "We will go over at once if you are ready to assist me."

They started for the shanty.

"Here's a stick for you, sir," said Nick, handing him a stout piece of wood he picked up.

The gentleman took it.

As they drew close to the building Nick called a halt.

"Let me go first," he said.

He went forward and walked into the place.

Crouched in a corner he saw the young thieves haggling over the possession of the watch after dividing the money.

They sprang up and looked aggressively at the boy.

"What do you want?" one of them demanded in a surly tone.

"The money and the watch you stole from the gentleman outside the restaurant," replied Nick.

"What are you talkin' about?" snarled the other chap.

"You heard what I said."

"Get out of here or I'll paste you in the jaw."

"You'd better come up, for I'm not alone," said the young messenger, giving a sign for the others to advance.

The rascals realized that they had been detected, and with one accord they made a rush at Nick, intending to overthrow him and make their escape.

The Wall Street boy was looking for something of the kind and braced himself.

As they swooped down on him he struck out straight from the shoulder and caught one of them a heavy clip on the jaw.

The other landed a glancing blow on Nick's face and dashed out at the door against Roger and the gentleman.

They grabbed him, and held him in spite of his struggles.

The other fellow was unable to pass Nick, and was having it hot and heavy with the boy.

As Nick was an expert boxer, he put it all over the fellow, and finally knocked him down.

The boy had seen him drop the watch in his side pocket, and he deftly took it out and put it in his own.

Then he began searching the fellow's vest for his share of the money.

Of course, the rascal resisted, and Nick hated to punch him while he had him down, but he threatened to do it unless he lay quiet.

"As soon as I get hold of the money you stole, I'll let you go, though you ought to be jailed," said Nick.

"I didn't steal nothin', you gink," snorted the chap.

"I saw you, so lying won't do you any good."

The fellow tried to punch him, but the boy caught him by the wrists and gave them such a wrench that the thief squealed and swore roundly.

"Will you give up the money, or shall I give you another taste of that?"

"I ain't got a cent. The other feller has it."

"Your word doesn't go with me," said Nick.

He forced one of the rascal's arms down and put his knee on it.

While he held the other by the wrist he went through his vest pockets, and in one of them found a small roll of money.

As soon as he got hold of it he released the thief and jumped up.

The fellow scrambled on his feet and glared at him.

"You can go now," said Nick.

Outside, Roger went through the other fellow's pockets while the gentleman held him with a strong grip, and found the other half of the money.

The fellow who had come out second best inside the shanty looked at Nick, who stood ready to mix things up again if necessary, and concluded that he'd better go.

His companion was allowed to depart with him.

Nick handed the gentleman his watch and the money he

had recovered, and Roger restored him the rest of his property.

"I am very much obliged to you both, young gentlemen. My name is John Tucker. Will you tell me your names?"

"Mine is Nick Norton," said Nick.

"And mine is Roger Sherwood," said Roger.

"Will you give me your addresses? I should like to send you some little token of my gratitude for your services."

"That isn't necessary, Mr. Tucker," said Nick.

"But it would please me to do so," said the gentleman. "I have no doubt you would each accept a scarf-pin, or something of that kind."

"I live over in New Jersey," said Nick, "but I work for Nathan Spear, stockbroker, of No. — Wall Street."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Tucker.

"I live in the Bronx," said Roger, "and I work in Wall Street, too, for Engle & Hartford, No. — Exchange Place."

"Well, well; so you are both connected with the financial district. I also do business in Wall Street. My office is at No. —."

"Are you a broker?" asked Nick, with some interest.

"No. I am an operator on the market, and employ brokers to do my work."

"Well, we are very glad that we were able to do you a service, Mr. Tucker," said Nick. "It was lucky for you that we patronized that little restaurant while waiting for the train, and that I happened to look out of the side window when I did."

"It was, indeed," admitted the operator.

"The train is in," said Roger. "We'd better get on board a car, or we might get left."

Mr. Tucker agreed with him, and they started back for the station.

The boys learned that the operator lived on Madison avenue, Manhattan, and that he had been connected with Wall street for a great many years.

He invited Nick and Roger to call and see him at his office any time between noon and four that they found the chance to do so.

They promised that they would, and during the run to the East New York junction, where they changed to another train for the Flatbush avenue station, where they would connect with an elevated train for the Brooklyn Bridge, the boys told him how they came to be at Canarsie Landing.

In due time they crossed the East river.

Mr. Tucker and Roger took a Third avenue elevated train at the City Hall station, while Nick walked across the park, and took his way down Park Place to West street to reach the Cortlandt street ferry and get a boat for Jersey City.

CHAPTER III.

CAUGHT IN THE ACT.

When Nick arrived at his home he found that his mother and sisters had finished their supper some time before, but his own supper was in the oven waiting for him.

The lunch he and Roger had eaten at the Canarsie Landing restaurant did not prevent him from doing justice to what was set before him, for he had a healthy appetite.

His mother and sisters were delighted with the string of fish she showed them.

They would come in very nicely for breakfast next morning.

"I caught something better than the fish," said Nick, remembering the wallet.

"What is it?" asked Bessie Norton, curiously.

"A pocketbook full of money."

"Go on," cried the girls, incredulously.

"Seeing is believing, isn't it? There's the pocketbook. I fished it out of Jamaica Bay," and he took it out of his pocket and exhibited it.

The appearance of the wallet, though now fairly dry, vouched for his statement.

"My goodness!" cried Emily Norton. "Is there really money in it?"

"Nothing surer, for I've looked into it."

Nick opened it and showed them the mushy-looking roll.

"The first two bills are \$50 ones. I haven't looked at the rest, for they were too wet to touch. They are pretty damp yet. Start the gas in the oven, mother, so the bills can be thoroughly dried. Then we'll examine them and see how much I'm worth."

"My, what a lucky boy you are!" cried Bessie.

"Yes, I'm luckier than even that."

"How?"

"I acquired a winning tip in the market this morning. I'm going to invest every cent of that money on it. If there's \$500 in that wad, I expect to make at least \$1,000 out of it."

"But you might lose instead of win."

"Not a bit of it. The deal I'm going into is one that will make the dollars."

"That's a good thing to make; but you've always told us that speculating in Wall Street was a very risky game of chance. That the majority of people who engaged in it came out at the short end."

"So they do, but in my case I have inside information to back me. I know that a certain thing is on the books. I will simply bet on as sure a thing as a person can ever expect to get hold of in Wall Street."

"Well, you know your business, Nick, but it seems like a shame to risk a lot of money that one finds in such a fortunate way on the uncertain fluctuation of stocks," said Bessie.

"Don't you worry, Bessie. If I should lose, by accident, you won't be out anything," replied her brother.

An hour later the roll of money was in shape to be handled, and Nick, in the presence of his mother and sisters, separated the bills with due care.

There proved to be \$650 in the wad, and Nick hugged himself with satisfaction.

He handed his mother \$50 of it, and put the rest away in his trunk.

On Monday morning he carried the \$600 with him to Wall Street, and before noon visited the little bank on Nassau street, and put it up as marginal security on sixty shares of A. & B. at 85, the market price.

As he was leaving his office for the day, a boy came in and asked for him.

"You want to see Nick Norton?" he said.

"Yes."

"That's my name."

"Sign for this package, please," said the youth, producing a small book and a much smaller package.

Nick saw that it came from a well-known jeweler's, and he surmised it was the present promised by Mr. Tucker.

He signed the book, opened the box, and found a handsome pair of gold cuff buttons, with a card bearing John Tucker's name, and his best regards.

At the entrance downstairs Nick found Roger waiting for him.

"See what Mr. Tucker sent me," said Roger, showing a handsome scarf-pin. "What did he send you?"

"These cuff-buttons," replied Nick, producing the box.

"They're fine," commented Roger, "and I think the pin is a dandy."

"That's what it is. Well, did you go in on A. & B.?"

"I did. Bought ten shares. If I lose I won't do a thing to you."

"Don't worry. You won't lose if you work the deal right."

"How high do you think the price will go?"

"I couldn't tell you, but I look to see it reach par. You must watch the market as closely as you can, and sell when you think it's as high as it's likely to go. That's all the advice I can give you, for that is the way I shall work matters myself. It is better to sell too soon than too late."

"I believe you, but the question is to judge the best time, and then get the chance to close out. Our time is pretty well employed, and we haven't the same opportunity that an outsider has to either follow the market or sell when we want to."

"When you have decided to sell you must manage to make the time necessary to close out."

"It is easier to preach that than to practice it."

"Well, every tub sits on its own bottom. I'll gamble on it that I'll find the time or I'll know the reason why not. That roll I found in the wallet footed up \$650, and I've put \$600 of it on A. & B. I'll take a long chance with my office before I'll allow myself to get left on that deal."

During the rest of the week A. & B. hung around 85, but on Saturday morning it got suddenly busy and closed at noon at 90.

The boys came together about a quarter of one.

Both had kept track of the stock and were aware it had gone up five points.

"I'm \$300 ahead, old man," said Nick. "This is the deal that will make the dollars, all right."

"And I am fifty to the good," said Roger.

"A raise of five points more and we'll both stand to double our money. That ought to come on Monday or Tuesday, for the syndicate is evidently getting down to business at last."

"What shall we do with ourselves this afternoon?"

"Let's go over and see if Mr. Tucker is in. We promised to call on him."

"I don't believe he's there now," said Roger.

"We'll go and see, anyway. Then we'll go to lunch and think over some way of putting in the afternoon."

John Tucker's office was on the tenth floor of the Sunshine Building.

An elevator quickly took them up there.

A policeman went up in the same cage and got off at the same floor.

He had a document to deliver to one of the tenants.

"Did you hear about that new copper syndicate, officer?" asked Nick.

"What copper syndicate is that?" asked the policeman, innocently.

"I thought you were a member of it. You wear the uniform."

Then the cop dropped.

"Say, you Wall Street lads are awfully smart, aren't you?"

"Sure we are. Got to be to hold our jobs. Well, so-long. We go in here."

Nick turned the handle of Tucker's reception-room door and walked in, followed by Roger.

There was nobody there, and from the look of the bare bookkeeper's desk and the closed safe, the office was evidently closed for the day.

"Nothing doing, as I thought," said Roger; "let's go."

"Wait a moment. I heard a noise in the room yonder marked 'Private.' Maybe Mr. Tucker is there. He might have a reason for remaining after his office force has gone away. It's only a quarter past one, anyway. I'm going to take the liberty of looking in there."

Nick opened the door and glanced in.

He closed it quickly again and rushed back to Roger.

"That policeman went in the room opposite. Go in there and get him."

"What for?" asked Roger, in surprise.

"Because I say so. There's a thief in that room. I'll stay here and see that he doesn't sneak out this way. Hurry now."

Roger saw that Nick was in earnest, and knew what he said must be true, so he started across the corridor to find the officer.

He found the policeman and told him what was doing in Tucker's office.

When Nick heard footsteps outside he opened the door and let the officer and Roger in.

"Is this some other funny crack of yours, young fellow?" asked the cop, half suspicious of Nick.

"No. There's a man in that room who seems to be picking up all he can lay his hands on."

"Well, I'll take a look at him."

Nick flung open the door.

A man was kneeling on the floor of the closet.

Then Roger gave a yell, and the waiting policeman heard the signal and rushed into the office, followed by several tenants of the building.

CHAPTER IV.

A TIP FROM THE PAVEMENT.

The man sprang up with an exclamation of dismay.
The policeman nabbed him.

"What are you up to?" asked the cop.

"I'm looking for something," replied the suspect.

"Do you belong in this office?"

"I'm one of the clerks."

"Oh, you are."

"He is not telling the truth," said one of the tenants of the floor. "Mr. Tucker has only two clerks—one an old gentleman, his bookkeeper, and the other a young man, who is general assistant. I know them both. I am often in this office, and this man is a stranger to me."

"What have you to say to that?" asked the policeman.

The man had nothing to say, and his guilt seemed apparent.

The officer decided to take him to the station-house on general principles.

"Then Mr. Tucker ought to be notified," said Nick.

"Do you know where he is?" asked the policeman.

"I do not, but I dare say he has a telephone in his house, and it will be an easy matter to call his house up and find out if he is there. If he isn't, the party at the end of the wire will tell him the particulars when he does come in," said the boy.

"Then you'd better telephone," said the officer.

Nick picked up the telephone directory and found the number of Mr. Tucker's house 'phone.

He called up "Central" and asked to be connected.

He was presently in communication with Mr. Tucker's daughter.

Mr. Tucker had not got home yet, so Nick told the young lady the facts of the case, and asked her to inform her father when he came in.

He gave his own name and then rang off.

The policeman marched the suspect away, and the two boys left the building and went to lunch.

On Monday a very strong interest was developed at the Exchange in A. & B.

This was the natural result of the boom on Saturday morning, when the stock jumped five points.

The brokers who had control of it found it easy to send it up another five points by noon.

It fluctuated up and down during the remainder of the session, and closed at 95 at three.

That afternoon Mr. Tucker sent for Nick, got the facts about the thief in his office on Saturday, and thanked the boy for what he and Roger did.

Next day A. & B. continued its upward course, hitting par at one o'clock.

At half-past two it had reached 102 and a fraction, and Nick finding a chance to run up to the little bank, availed himself of it and sold out, for he guessed that the boom had about shot its bolt.

If he was wrong, he would have simply sold out a little too quick, which, as he had told Roger, was better than selling out too late.

The chances were that he wouldn't have so good a chance to clear up his deal as the present, and the stock might get on the toboggan and leave him in the lurch.

In any case, by selling now he would make \$17 a share, and that meant a profit of \$1,000 on the whole deal.

So he gave in his order, which he was told would be executed in a few minutes.

He returned to the office, and was not asked why he was extra long on his last errand.

He enjoyed a good reputation with his boss and all hands, and it was very seldom he was ever hauled over the coals.

The next errand he had was to go to the bank with the day's deposits, and there he met Roger in the line ahead of him.

He went up to his friend and asked him in a whisper whether he had got out from under.

"Yes, you can bet your life I did," replied Roger. "I cashed in at par."

"Then you've made about \$175?" said Nick.

"Yes."

"You are willing to admit that my tip was a good one?"

"It was fine as silk."

"If you hadn't bought you would have felt like kicking yourself about this time."

"I surely would."

Nick then took his place at the end of the line, and Roger waited for him to put his book in and get the credit entered, after which they left the bank together.

"I told you that deal would make the dollars," said Nick.

"You didn't tell any more than the truth. What did you sell at?"

"One hundred and two and three-eighths."

"And you've made—"

"A trifle over \$1,000."

"Gee! You're right in it."

"I always hope to be right in it where the dollars are concerned," said Nick, as he parted from his friend at the door of his office building.

When the little bank settled with him, Nick asked for a certificate of deposit instead of the cash, as it would be a safer way to have his money than in bills, and the cashier made out one to him for \$1,600, which included his marginal deposit on the deal.

He also got \$22 cash in addition.

He had already told his mother and sisters of his success with the deal, and they had congratulated him on his good luck.

It was certainly a great thing for him to find himself worth \$1,600, in such a sudden way, just as if he had picked it up in the street, or had been left a legacy from an unexpected source.

His folks naturally supposed that he would put it in a savings bank, as a nest-egg for his future, but Dick had other views with respect to it.

He placed the certificate in an envelope, with his name on it, and asked the cashier of the office to put it in the safe till he wanted it.

Nick had always been an interested reader of Wall Street news.

He had an idea that it would be to his advantage to keep in touch with what was going on around him.

In this way he acquired a habit of looking over the financial and mining papers that Mr. Spear, his employer, subscribed for.

Thus he came to know a whole lot more about stocks and

mining propositions than the average Wall Street messenger.

Among the various mining prospects that the promoters had endeavored to feed to the general public was one called the Golden Giant.

The name was an alluring one, but somehow or another the bunch of stock sent to agents in the East to sell did not go very well.

This might have been due to the fact that the public was overloaded with investments of a similar kind that had not panned out.

At any rate, 30,000 of the 50,000 shares forwarded to Stiles & Bunkum, on Broad street, still remained unsold in the safe of that firm, though they offered it at ten cents a share, while it was quoted in Goldfield at twelve.

One morning as Nick was walking down Exchange Place on his way back to the office, he noticed an envelope on the edge of the sidewalk.

He picked it up for the purpose of removing the stamp in the corner.

His sister Emily had asked him to collect all the used postage stamps for her, as she had been requested by a lady friend to get her as many as she could.

Nick dropped the soiled envelope in his pocket and went on his way.

When he took his seat in the office he pulled out the envelope and looked at it before tearing off the stamp.

He could not make out the superscription, as it had been soiled and somewhat rubbed off by numerous footprints.

He pulled out the enclosure to see what the writing was about, just to satisfy a passing curiosity and to fill in time.

It was dated a few days back from the Nevada town of Paradise, and was addressed in a familiar way to the writer's friend, Tom.

It ran as follows:

"I've just got on to the finest piece of inside information that a fellow could annex, and I am taking advantage of it in a way that will line my pockets in a short time with 'gelt.' I send the tip on to you so that you can do likewise. You have doubtless heard of a mine in this district called the Golden Giant. It figures on the Goldfield Stock Exchange as one of the many prospects, for it has never risen to the dignity of a producer. It is traded in very little, but the owners have managed to keep it quoted at around ten cents by wash sales, and other devices known to the initiated. As a matter of fact, it has no tangible value. Now, pard, I have discovered that a rich lead of ore has just been found in that mine, and that the news is being kept back until the owners can gobble up the shares in the hands of outsiders. That accounts for the sudden drop of Golden Giant to five cents. Fifty thousand shares of this stock were sent East to be sold at ten cents some months ago. Stiles & Bunkum, of No. — Broad street, is the firm that handled them, and it is probable they sold the majority of them. By visiting that firm you will doubtless be able to get a line on the more important purchasers. You want to lose no time in buying up every share you can find. If Stiles & Bunkum have any left, gobble them, then look for the rest. You ought to get them for four cents now. Don't lose any time over it, for the news of the strike is

liable to come out inside of a week or two, and then Golden Giant will be in demand at a quarter and upwards. Yours,

"JAKE."

The reader may well believe that the contents of this letter greatly interested Nick.

He looked at the envelope again and saw that it bore the Paradise post-mark.

Then he read it all over again.

"This has all the ear-marks of a gilt-edged tip," he thought. "I must see if I can get hold of any Golden Giant myself. It is probable that Jake has already visited Stiles & Bunkum and bought up any shares that firm had left, but by calling on them I may find out where I can get hold of a few."

When he was called on to go out again he asked the cashier for the envelope which contained his certificate of deposit, and took it away with him.

On his way back from his errand he dropped in at the office of Stiles & Bunkum and asked the cashier if the firm had any Golden Giant mining stock.

"We have—quite a batch of it," replied the cashier.

"What are you asking for it?"

"Who are you from?"

"Do you know Nathan Spear?" asked Nick.

"Certainly. Are you from him?"

"I'm his messenger."

"You can tell him that we will him any part of 30,000 shares for five cents."

"If you will take four cents I'll buy the lot."

"Wait a moment till I see Mr. Stiles."

The cashier went into one of the private rooms.

He returned in a few minutes and said he could have the stock at that figure if he took the block.

"I'll take it. I'm buying it for myself. Here is a certificate of deposit on the Nassau Street Bank for \$1,600. I'll turn it over to you, and you can send me the difference, \$400, when you send the new certificates. Send everything to Nick Norton, care of Nathan Spear, No. — Wall street."

The cashier looked the certificate over carefully.

"We don't know you, young man. Why don't you run up to the bank and get the money yourself?"

"Because I haven't time. My time belongs to Mr. Spear during working hours."

"Are you going back to your office now?"

"Yes."

"Endorse this certificate, and then I'll send our boy with you to your office. Get your cashier to identify you to the boy and it will be all right."

"All right," replied Nick. "Give me a receipt for \$1,600, and the usual memorandum showing that I have bought 30,000 shares of Golden Giant at four cents."

This was done, and then Nick and Stiles & Bunkum's boy went out together.

Nick was duly identified by Spear's cashier, and the boy returned to his office.

CHAPTER V.

NICK SELLS AGAINST HIS WILL.

Stiles & Bunkum's boy had hardly more than returned and reported that Nick was the right party, when a man entered the office and asked for one of the firm.

He was shown into Mr. Stiles' room.

Three minutes later Stiles came to the cashier's window and asked him if he had sold any part of the Golden Giant shares to Nathan Spear.

"I have sold the whole block to Spear's messenger boy for four cents, and he paid me with a certificate of deposit on the Nassau Street Bank, which he transferred to the firm. The certificate calls for \$1,600, so there is a balance of \$400 due him which we are to send to Spear's office with the new certificates when they are ready," replied the cashier.

"Hum!" said Stiles. "I have another customer for the shares who is willing to pay five cents for them."

"He's too late. The boy holds our receipt and the memorandum of the purchase."

Stiles was disappointed.

He knew that the firm could not go back on the deal, so he returned to his visitor and told him that the block of Golden Giant they had held for months had been sold only a short time before he called.

The caller looked mad and asked who had bought the stock.

Stiles told him.

The man made a note of Nick's name and office address.

"What's stirring in Golden Giant that you and that boy should both be looking for so much of the stock?" asked the broker, curiously. "I should think our firm, who are the agents of the company, ought to have been informed if anything was in the wind. We haven't had a call for that stock in months. A few days ago it suddenly dropped in the Goldfield market to a nickel. That doesn't look very encouraging to holders of the stock. I am sorry you didn't come sooner, for we let the boy have the shares at four cents."

"I'd have given you five, or even six," said the man, grouchily.

"You must have some strong reason for being willing to pay a point above the market on Golden Giant."

"I have."

"Well, you've lost your chance by a few minutes," said Stiles.

"Can you give me a list of some of the persons, besides this boy, whom you have sold the shares to since you became the company's agents?"

"We don't usually do that, Mr. Baxter. If you are anxious to secure some of the stock, give us the order and we will try and get it for you."

Baxter saw that Stiles was fishing for a commission.

As that was business on the part of Stiles & Bunkum, the visitor could not kick, so he gave the broker an order to buy any part of the 20,000 shares sold when the stock was first put on the market in the East.

As for the shares bought by Nick, he did not believe that the boy had bought them for himself.

He had learned that Nick was messenger for Nathan Spear, broker, and presumed that Mr. Spear had sent him to buy the stock.

He had not learned that Nick paid for them with a certificate of deposit made out in his own name.

Presumably Mr. Spear had bought the shares for a cus-

tomer, and Baxter hoped to be able to get them from that customer, through the broker.

Accordingly, when he left the office of Stiles & Bunkum, he went straight to Nathan Spear's.

Mr. Spear was in and he was shown into the room by Nick, who did not dream that this was the man who lost the note he had found on the street.

Baxter stated his errand.

He wanted to buy some Golden Giant mining stock, and, having heard that Mr. Spear had bought quite a block of it that morning, he wanted to see if he could get some of it at an advance on the price he had paid.

"Who told you that I bought a block of Golden Giant this morning?" asked Spear.

"I got my information at the office of Stiles & Bunkum, who sold the shares to you," replied Baxter.

"You must have misunderstood the person who told you that, sir. I did not purchase a block of Golden Giant mining stock from Stiles & Bunkum this morning, nor, for that matter, from anybody else. As a rule, I don't handle mining stocks, though I buy them for anybody that gives me an order to that effect," replied the broker.

"Well, that's funny. Mr. Stiles certainly told me that he sold your messenger boy 30,000 shares of Golden Giant at four cents."

"It must have been some other broker's messenger."

"The boy's name was Nicholas Norton."

"It was!" exclaimed Spear, in some surprise. "That is the name of my messenger."

"And you say he did not buy any Golden Giant for you?"

"Not a share, and he wouldn't be likely to buy them for any one else. However, he's outside. I'll call him in and have this thing cleared up."

Broker Spear rang for Nick.

The young messenger responded at once.

"You didn't call at Stiles & Bunkum's office this morning, did you?" asked his employer.

"Yes, sir; I did."

"Who sent you there?"

"Nobody. I stopped there on my way back from the last errand I went out on."

"Why did you visit Stiles & Bunkum's office?"

"I heard that the firm had a bunch of Golden Giant mining stock, and as I wanted a lot of it, I went to see if I could get any from them."

"Who employed you to purchase Golden Giant Mining shares?"

"No, one, sir; I wanted the stock myself."

"You did?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did you want it for?"

"An investment."

"You found that Stiles & Bunkum had some of the stock on hand?"

"Yes, sir."

"How much of it did you buy?"

"All they had."

"How much was that?"

"Thirty thousand shares."

Mr. Spear stared at his messenger.

"How much did you pay for it?"

"Four cents a share."

"That's \$1,200. How did you pay for it?"

"I paid cash for the stock. The certificates are to be sent here when they are ready, together with \$400 due me."

"Four hundred dollars due you! What do you mean by that?"

"I gave Stiles & Bunkum a bank certificate of deposit calling for \$1,600. They will owe me the difference between that and the price of the stock when they have collected it."

"I wasn't aware that you were worth so much money. Is this a legacy you have been partially investing in Golden Giant?"

"No, sir; the money was not a legacy, but it's mine just the same."

"Well, I can't say that I approve of the investment, but that is not my affair. You would have shown better judgment by asking my advice beforehand. I would have suggested something staple. If I recollect aright, Golden Giant is a drug on the market. I wouldn't give two cents a share, personally, for it. Who persuaded you to buy such stock?"

"I heard that a rich lode had been discovered in the mine, and that the price of it was sure to advance soon."

Baxter gave a start and looked keenly at the boy.

"Who told you that?" he asked.

"Why do you wish to know that?"

"Because I didn't think that anybody but myself in the East was acquainted with—"

Baxter stopped short when he realized he was giving away a valuable fact.

Then he remembered about having lost his friend Jake's letter.

"Look here, did you find a letter and get the news from it?" he said, sharply.

"Why do you ask that?"

"Because I lost the letter containing the information you mentioned. I want to know if you found it."

"What is your name?" asked Nick.

"My name is Baxter."

"That throws no light on the fact. What is your first name?"

"Thomas."

"And the man who wrote you the letter calls himself Jake?"

"Yes, Jake Ferris."

"Then I found the letter to which you have referred. Here it is."

"Where did you find it?"

"Close to the gutter in Exchange Place."

"You read the letter, and on the strength of what's in it you bought the Golden Giant stock?"

"I admit it."

"Then it is your duty to turn the stock over to me at a small advance."

"I don't see it. I came by the tip fairly enough. I'll leave it to my employer," said Nick.

"Let me see the letter," asked Mr. Spear.

Baxter handed it to him.

He examined it without reading the enclosure.

"How came you to pick this dirty envelope up, Nick?"

The boy explained that he had done so merely to take the stamp off to hand his sister, who was making a collection of used stamps for a friend.

"I read the enclosure merely for fun, not because I had the least idea that it amounted to anything. I was surprised at the news it contained, and thought it was worth taking a chance on. It appears that I made no mistake," said Nick.

"You had no right to make use of confidential information," persisted Baxter.

"Why not, under the circumstances? You see the superscription is entirely blotted out, and that inside there is not a clue to the person it was sent to. If I had known to whom the letter belonged, I would have sent it to you; but I didn't. I bought the stock at the risk that the information might or might not be valuable, and so I intend to hold on to it."

"I'll pay you double what you gave for it," said Baxter.

"I'd rather not sell at that."

"I think, under the circumstances, he ought to take it," said Baxter to Spear.

"How do you know that the information in that letter amounts to anything?" the broker asked Nick.

"I don't know, of course; but this gentleman's anxiety to get the stock is some evidence that it isn't a fake," replied the boy.

"What is the best figure you're willing to offer the boy?" Spear asked Baxter.

"I think ten cents—"

"I won't take ten cents," said Nick.

"Well, I'll make it fifteen, then."

"Inside of a week or two it will be worth anywhere from a quarter to half a dollar a share. Why should I sell for fifteen cents?" said Nick.

"But the circumstances under which you got hold of the information ought to induce you to do the right thing," said Baxter.

"I think you had better accept fifteen cents, Nick," said the broker. "You'll make a handsome profit, and though you have the right, in a general way, to hold on to the stock, this gentleman, nevertheless, has reason for complaint if you do. By losing so important a letter he jeopardized his prospects, but now that you know the information was solely intended for him, I think you can afford to do the grateful."

"All right, sir. Since that is your advice, I'll agree, though I consider I am losing a mighty good thing. The shares will be delivered to me some time to-morrow, Mr. Baxter. To save time and trouble, I will, with Mr. Spear's permission, go with you to Stiles & Bunkum, and transfer the stock to you if you pay Mr. Spear \$4,500."

"I will write my check for the amount."

"You will have to go to your bank and have it certified."

"Can't you do that?"

Baxter mentioned the name of the institution.

"That's several blocks from here."

"You can carry the check up there, Nick, and get it certified," said Spear.

"All right, sir. I'll meet you at Stiles & Bunkum's, Mr. Baxter, inside of half an hour."

That was satisfactory to Baxter, who wrote the check to Nick's order, and handed it to him.

Inside of the stated time the boy entered Stiles & Bunkum's place and found Baxter there.

He transferred the shares, fully paid for, to the man, and received his \$400 balance on the certificate from the cashier.

That closed the deal for Nick with a profit of \$3,300; but he felt sore, nevertheless, for he had expected to make more than double that amount, if not a great deal more, as there was no saying how high Golden Giant might go if the lead proved to be really a rich one.

CHAPTER VI.

A THREATENED TRAGEDY.

When he met Roger that afternoon after business hours he told him about the letter he found that morning, and the tip on Golden Giant it had contained; how he had taken advantage of it, and how, finally, Mr. Spear had induced him to draw out in favor of the man to whom the letter he had found belonged.

The recital rather astonished his friend.

"I don't see but you had the right to hold on to that stock," said Roger. "Suppose it goes up to a dollar a share, see what you lose."

"I can't help it. I didn't want to sell, but my boss kind of forced it on me, though he left the decision to me," said Nick.

"He oughtn't to have interfered. What was the man to him?"

"Nothing, but he appeared to think that he had some rights in the matter."

"I fail to see what rights he had. He lost the letter, so the funeral was his. If anybody else had found it, I'll bet he wouldn't have got a look-in. I think you're easy."

"Well, the thing is done now. I've made \$3,300 out of it, which is a pretty good rake-off."

"Not if the stock should go to a dollar. You'd be about \$25,000 out, and that's a small fortune for anybody."

"I don't think it is likely to go above fifty cents. There are a good many producers the stock of which can be bought for less than fifty cents. The Golden Giant would have to turn up more than one vein of ore of good quality to send the stock to a dollar."

"Well, even at fifty cents you'd be out \$12,000."

"Oh, well, what's the use of talking about it?"

"No use now. You've simply thrown away a mighty fine chance to rake in the dollars."

"And I'll bet you'd have done the same if you'd been in my shoes."

"Perhaps I would, but I doubt it. I'd sooner throw up my job than sacrifice a snap just to please my boss. What's \$8 per? Just \$400 a year. What's \$400 a year beside a pretty sure chance of making \$12,000? That's the way I look at it."

Nick changed the subject, for he didn't care to continue it.

When he got home he told his mother his story, and later on his sisters.

The girls sympathized with him, and thought he had lost

a good thing, though they agreed that what he had got out of the deal wasn't so bad.

After that Nick kept a sharp eye on the daily mining report, watching to see how much of a jump Golden Giant would make when the news came out.

A week passed without anything happening to boom the stock, which was now down to three cents.

Then a second week passed and the same condition continued.

One day he saw Broker Stiles on the Curb, and he ventured to ask him how Golden Giant was coming on.

"You're the boy who bought those 30,000 shares from me and then sold them to a man named Baxter?" said Stiles.

"Yes, sir; and I've been kicking myself ever since for being persuaded into giving up a good thing," said Nick.

"What good thing do you refer to? You must have made something out of Baxter on that deal. What did he pay you for the shares?"

"Fifteen cents."

"How much?"

Nick repeated his words.

"Oh, come now, you're putting it pretty strong. Why, I bought 10,000 more for him for five cents."

"I can't help that. He paid me fifteen cents in the presence of my boss. He wanted the stock the worst way."

"He must have."

"You think fifteen cents a whole lot for Golden Giant?"

"I certainly do. Why, it's only worth three cents now. You made a mighty good thing out of it—over \$3,000."

"I could have done better by holding on."

"I'd like to know how."

"Because a rich vein of ore has been discovered in the mine, and as soon as the news is published the price of the shares will boom right away."

"How did you get this information? Our firm is the company's agents, and we haven't heard a whisper of any discovery having been made."

"The owners are keeping the matter quiet."

"How did you learn all this?"

"Through a private letter from Paradise."

"I've heard of these private pointers before, and people have fallen down using them. You can take my word for it that you've done better by selling at fifteen than you would by holding on. I don't believe there's anything in your statement that a rich vein of ore has been found in Golden Giant. It's two weeks now since you bought and sold that stock, and the only change in Golden Giant that I know of has been for the worse. I suppose somebody sent the same pointer to Baxter, which was the reason he was so anxious to buy every share he could get hold of. It is my idea that he's out and injured several thousand dollars by it, which he never will recover."

Nick was considerably impressed by his talk with Stiles, and he began to wonder if he had been lucky, after all.

The next time he was alone with Mr. Spear he brought up the subject.

"The news of the discovery of that lode in Golden Giant hasn't come out yet," he said.

"No, and I have an idea it won't," replied the broker. "I didn't take much stock in the statement you said the

letter contained, and for that reason I advised you to accept the man's offer of fifteen cents. It was an easy and profitable way, in my estimation, to smooth down his ruffled feathers."

"I was talking to Mr. Stiles to-day, and he told me that Baxter bought 10,000 more of the shares through his firm at five cents. Mr. Stiles thinks about as you do—that there is nothing in the idea that a vein of ore has been found in the mine. His firm is the agent of the company, and he thinks he'd have heard something about the matter if there had been anything in it."

"I think he'd have got instructions not to sell the stock he had on hand if nothing else," said Mr. Spear.

Nick began to think so, too, and when he left the boss' room he felt more contented over having got out of Golden Giant at a good profit than he had since the day he sold the stock against his will.

When he next met Roger he called his attention to the fact that there was no change in the prospects of the Golden Giant mine.

"It's about time something was doing, don't you think?" he answered.

"I certainly do if there is any news to come out."

"Are you beginning to doubt that there was anything in your tip?"

"To say the truth, I am. Stiles, of Stiles & Bunkum, and my boss, put no faith in the alleged discovery of a rich vein of ore in the mine."

"If that letter didn't tell the truth, then you are ahead of the game."

"And Baxter is several thousand dollars behind it."

"That's his funeral, not yours."

In the end it proved to be Baxter's funeral, for the Golden Giant stock failed to participate in the anticipated boom.

It went up to six cents a share, after a time, but as long as Nick kept track of it it never went higher.

From which it will be seen that the only deal connected with the mine which made the dollars was the one in which the young messenger figured.

Mr. Spear was one of the conservative brokers who seldom speculated in the market.

He let his customers do that, and was content to pocket his commissions for buying and selling, which invariably came his way whether they won or lost.

Once in awhile, however, he ventured into the market, when he felt that a pretty good thing was in sight, but no matter how good it appeared to be, he played the game carefully, for no one knew better than he the risks of Wall Street speculation.

Thus it happened he went into a deal on Erie one day when the market was flushed over an unexpected advance in this uncertain stock.

He bought quite a bunch of shares during the morning excitement, and at half-past two, when the price had gone up five points, he dumped them on a broker named Dawson, who seemed anxious to get hold of the stock.

The deal had hardly been consummated, and Spear was on his way to the street with Dawson's memorandum in his pocket, when a big bear operator began dumping Erie out in great chunks right and left.

The market staggered under the attack and then went to pieces, like paper crumbling in the flame of a candle.

A wild panic followed.

The bulls rushed to cover, but few were fortunate in saving themselves from a considerable loss.

Among those who caught it worse of all was Dawson.

He sold out at a price that crippled him financially, and he left the Exchange raging like a lunatic.

He wasn't the only apparent lunatic, but he was the most unreasoning of the losers, for he laid his loss at the door of Spear, who sold him the stock on the heels of the decline.

He forgot that he had made the bid which Spear promptly accepted.

He tore across the street into his office, and, seating himself at his desk, began to figure out where he stood.

Ten minutes later he was making a bee-line for Spear's office.

Nick was in the waiting-room when he came in, with a bad look on his face.

"Is Spear in?" he roared.

"I'll see," replied the young messenger, diplomatically.

He knew the boss was in his room, but he judged it was well that Mr. Spear should know that he had an angry man to deal with.

He might consider it advisable to sidetrack his visitor.

Possibly Dawson suspected the boy's object, for as Nick opened the door of the private room, he pushed the boy rudely aside, and strode in unannounced.

"Look here, Spear, I want you to call that sale off," cried Dawson, glaring down on the broker.

"What's that? Call it off? After the market has gone to smash? Say, you're joking, aren't you?" replied Spear, clearly surprised.

"No, I'm not joking," snarled Dawson. "You knew Jackson was going to swamp Erie, and you unloaded on me to get out from under. Well, I'm not going to let you send me to the wall. I want the deal called off."

"That isn't according to Hoyle," replied Spear.

"I don't care what it isn't according to. You've put me in a tight hole, and I won't stand for it, do you understand?"

"Why, you bid for the stock and I let you have it."

"I didn't bid for so much."

"I've got your memorandum in your own writing, which proves that you did."

"I don't care what you have. It's a mistake."

"That's all nonsense!"

"Are you going to call it off?"

"Certainly not. Do you take me for a fool?"

"Then I'll blow your roof off, and my own afterward," cried Dawson, flashing out a revolver and aiming it at Spear.

Nick, however, was on the watch, for he suspected, from Dawson's looks, that there was trouble brewing.

He stood just outside the door, which he held ajar, listening to the man's blustering words.

When he heard the visitor's threat he opened the door and glanced in.

One look was enough for him.

He sprang forward, seized the hand that held the weapon, and pulled it aside.

There was a flash, a loud report, and a splintering of glass, as the bullet ploughed its way through the window overlooking Wall Street.

CHAPTER VII.

NICK AND THE BURGLARS.

The report of the weapon produced great excitement in the office, and, likewise, among all the tenants of the corridor, and their clerks and visitors.

The cashier, two of the clerks, and several customers appeared at the door of Spear's room, and beheld Nick struggling with Dawson for the possession of the revolver.

The cashier and one of the clerks sprang to his aid, and the half crazy broker was disarmed and held a prisoner.

Spear said that Dawson had aimed his weapon at his head, and threatened to shoot him, and he looked as if he meant business.

He was satisfied that he had been saved by the timely appearance of Nick.

"What shall we do with him?" asked the cashier.

"I hate to have him locked up, but he seems to be dangerous in his present frame of mind," said Spear.

"I'll fix you yet," roared Dawson, menacingly.

"If you talk like that I'll send for an officer and have you taken away," replied Spear.

"I don't care what you do. I intend to get you unless you square that deal with me."

"You must be out of your head, Dawson."

Nick had an idea that a policeman ought to be sent for, so he slipped out of the room, through the crowd, and telephoned to the station-house for one.

The crowd grew larger in the waiting-room as the people outside located the point of the trouble.

Spear was still trying to pacify Dawson when Nick got back to the room.

The visitor was too much worked up over his losses at the Exchange to listen to reason.

The one idea possessed him that Spear had forced him to the wall, and he felt that only revenge would satisfy him.

Spear felt that the arrest of Dawson was imperative under the circumstances, and nodded when Nick told him he had telephoned for an officer.

The policeman duly arrived, and after he had been made acquainted with the circumstances of the case he was requested to clear the crowd out to begin with.

With the assistance of the clerks he speedily did this.

Nick was then sent to get a cab, so that Dawson might be taken away with as little publicity as possible.

As soon as matters had resumed their normal condition, Spear thanked Nick for his prompt action, and assured him that he would not forget it.

By this time the affair had circulated pretty much all over Wall Street, and it was discussed in connection with the short panic in all the offices.

Newspaper reporters came into Spear's office to get the facts for their papers," and they were turned over to Nick.

Nick left the office late that day with Roger, who had come up to see what the trouble was about.

He had rather an exciting story to tell his mother and

sisters, and they were of the opinion that he had saved Mr. Spear's life.

Next morning Nick and his boss appeared at the police court.

Dawson had spent the night in a cell, and had cooled down.

He realized that he had put himself in a pretty bad position.

His wife and a lawyer were present, and the latter, having had an interview with his client, came to Spear, and asked him if he intended to press the charge.

"I certainly do, for I don't propose to be intimidated, perhaps shot, by Dawson," replied the broker.

"But he thoroughly regrets the occurrence, and is willing to make any amends you think proper to demand. He says his losses during the slump upset him so much that he hardly knew what he did at your office," said the lawyer.

"Well, I've no desire to make things any harder for him than they are, but if it had not been for the prompt action of my office boy, Dawson would probably have shot me. The fact that he was broken up by his losses does not excuse his attack on me. I gave him every chance to square the matter before I sent for a policeman, but he simply would not listen to reason, and in self-defense I was compelled to have him pulled in. Now the case is out of my hands. The judge would probably not permit me to withdraw the charge without better reasons than I could give," said Spear.

After some further talk between them the lawyer spoke to the magistrate.

He explained the state of mind which had led Dawson to threaten Spear, said that the prisoner deeply regretted his conduct, and that Spear was willing to withdraw the charge, believing that Dawson would make things all right.

The magistrate said that the charge would have to stand, but that the lawyer could waive examination, in which case he would formally hold the prisoner and admit him to bail, pending the subsequent action of the Grand Jury.

Accordingly, Dawson was called to the bar and pleaded not guilty.

His lawyer waived examination, and the judge remanded the prisoner to the Tombs, fixing his bail at \$2,500.

Spear and Nick returned to the office, and the lawyer started out to get the required bail to free his client.

On the following day Nick thought he saw another chance to make something out of the market by buying C. & D., which was going up.

So he went to the little bank and gave his order for 400 shares at 78.

When the Exchange closed at three that day, C. & D. was up to 80.

Nick said nothing to his folks about his new deal when he got home.

He was working this speculation wholly on his judgment, and it was possible that notwithstanding the prospects looked good, he might come out at the small end of the horn.

If he won, as he expected to, he would be proud to tell of the exploit, but if he lost he preferred that no one but himself should know the fact.

On the following day Spear called him into his office and presented him with a handsome gold watch and chain, in grateful appreciation of his services in the Dawson affair.

Nick thought it too good for everyday wear, so he sported it only on Sundays, and on evenings when he went calling on his friends, or to an entertainment.

Several days passed and C. & D. got as high as 83 and a fraction.

"I guess it won't go much higher," thought Nick; "I'm going to sell, for I see about \$2,000 profit in it, and that's no small haul for a messenger boy like me to rake in."

So he sold, and when the little bank settled with him he found himself \$2,100 richer.

He was going to tell his people that he was now worth \$7,000, but concluded not to, as he remembered they believed he had put the results of his A. & B. and Golden Giant deals in a savings bank.

The bank issued a new certificate of deposit to him, and he put that away in the office safe as he had done with the previous ones.

A few evenings later Nick left his home right after supper and started for the Bronx to go to an amateur show with Roger Sherwood.

As it would be late when the show was over, it was arranged that he should stay all night at his friend's house.

He took a Third avenue elevated train at City Hall Park and was soon speeding northward.

He had a long ride ahead of him, as Roger lived well up in the borough.

Having nothing better to do, he amused himself looking out of the window at the lighted buildings past which the train hummed, and when he tired of that he glanced around at the passengers in the car.

The only ones that attracted his attention were two fairly well-dressed men whose faces were not particularly prepossessing.

One wore a black skull and cross-bones pin, with rubies for eyes, while the other sported a heavy seal ring, with a small skull and cross-bones cut in the stone in intaglio fashion.

Nick occupied the window side of a double seat, and they sat facing him, which enabled him to get a near view of their odd-looking jewelry.

He wondered how it was that both of the men's tastes inclined to the piratical emblem, and he half suspected that they might be crooks.

The train was well up in the Bronx when the men got up and left the car at a station.

Before the train reached the next station it came to a sudden stop.

The moments passed and it did not go on.

Impatient passengers buttonholed the conductor, and learned that for some reason the electric current which ran that division of the road had been turned off.

He couldn't say when it would be turned on again.

For a mile or more in either direction trains were stalled at the point they happened to be when the power ceased to operate them.

Some were at stations, and this was convenient for the passengers if they were in a hurry and felt they couldn't stand the uncertainty of overhead progress.

Most of the trains stood at varying distances from the nearest station, and this was the case with the train Nick was on.

Under such circumstances the minutes seem very long—several times their ordinary length.

After the delay had lasted a number of minutes the passengers in the car began kicking.

They took to crowding out on the platform, that is, the male portion did, to see if they could learn anything more about the stoppage, but they couldn't.

Five or six minutes more went by and there was no change.

A number of the more venturesome and impatient individuals pulled open the gate and started for the station ahead along the track.

They argued that the power having been cut off, there was no particular danger.

Others followed, and when Nick saw such an exodus he concluded to venture, too.

He did, and reached the station with the others.

The whole bunch descended to the street.

"I guess I'll walk the rest of the way because I can cut up Boston road and save several blocks," thought Nick.

Accordingly, he started.

He had covered eight blocks, and reached a neighborhood where the houses were of a better class, and some little ways apart, when he heard a girl's scream.

It came from the residence he was passing, and was followed by a cry for help.

"My gracious! Some girl is in trouble," ejaculated Nick, coming to a stop.

No other sounds reached his ears, though he listened intently.

Satisfied that something was up, Nick ventured to open the iron gate and enter the grounds.

The house looked dark and unoccupied from the front.

As the cries had come from the rear, Nick passed around there.

He looked up at the windows, but there was not a single illumination.

Under the circumstances he hardly knew what to do.

He stood and gazed in an undecided way at the back of the mansion.

Finally he went up to what he presumed was the kitchen door, and saw that it was ajar.

The splintered woodwork around the lock told him that it had been forced by some kind of an implement.

"I'll bet there are thieves in the house," thought the young messenger. "If I knew where to find a cop I'd chase after him and tell him what I think is in the wind here, but I haven't seen an officer since I left Third avenue. It would be like hunting for a needle in a haystack to look for one. What shall I do then? I guess I'll go in and look around. The people who live here appear to be away. That scream likely came from a young servant girl who was left alone in the house. She discovered the thieves, started to give the alarm, and was choked off by them."

That's the way Nick figured matters as he walked up the back stairs to the main floor.

When he reached the main hall, which was dimly lighted

by a single electric bulb, he stopped to listen, but heard not a sound.

He turned the handle of the nearest door, and looked in on a dark, silent room.

"There appears to be nobody on this floor. I must go higher," he said to himself, walking toward the staircase.

The thick carpet deadened his footfalls.

All was darkness above.

Up he went till he reached the second landing, and then he saw a glimmer of light.

It came through the crack of a door and appeared to be moving.

He pushed open the door and looked in.

The men were at work on the steel door of a large wall safe.

The only light they had to guide their movements was a dark-lantern held by one of them, which he flashed full on the safe door.

Thus the man who appeared to be drilling holes in the safe door crouched in the circle of light, whilst his companion could be but indistinctly seen in the gloom.

Nick watched them with bated breath, wondering how he could queer their purpose.

The men occasionally exchanged words in a low tone, but wasted very little time on speech.

Their whole attention was centered on the safe, with which they were making rapid progress.

Nick, afraid the man might flash the lantern at the door where he stood, stepped into the room and felt his way along the wall for a few feet.

Suddenly his fingers rested on an electric light button, and he unconsciously pressed it.

Instantly the room was flooded with a soft, white glow from a cluster of bulbs encircling a chandelier.

The burglars were taken by surprise, and Nick equally so.

The rascal who was working the drill dropped it and sprang on his feet, whilst his companion turned his startled face full on the boy.

For a moment the scene represented a perfect tableau, but during that moment Nick recognized both of the men as the chaps he had ridden with in the train, and who had attracted his attention by their skull and cross-bones ornaments.

CHAPTER VIII.

NICK GETS THE CROOKS.

The tableau was over in a moment.

Action followed, and the first to move was Nick.

He possessed a quick eye and a brain that kept pace with his eye.

Even as he recognized the men he saw, lying on a marble-top table, midway between him and the burglars, a revolver, which one of the intruders had carelessly laid there.

The advantage that the weapon would place in his hands occurred to the plucky boy at the same moment.

Had the men been equally quick-witted they would have moved on the table when he did, with the object of preventing him gaining possession of it.

This they failed to do, and he was within reach of the

revolver before they realized his object in advancing on them single-handed.

With an imprecation the chap who had operated the drill started forward, but before he had advanced a yard, Nick snatched up the weapon, cocked it and covered him.

"Throw up your hands, or I'll put a ball into you," cried the boy, sternly.

The fellow stopped, but did not throw up his hands.

Nick, having seized the bull by the horns, so to speak, was prepared to see the game through.

In fact, that was the only way out of the situation.

"I'll give you one minute to do what I say," he said, in a tone that showed he meant business. "There are two of you, and I can't afford to take any chances with you. You'll throw up your hands, both of you, or I'll shoot you, and that's all there is about it."

"Blame you, who are you, anyway, and what brings you here?" said the man in advance.

"I'm not answering questions. You fellows are burglars. I have caught you in the act of breaking into that safe. I shall hand you over to the police, dead or alive. It is for you to decide which it shall be," said Nick.

"Never!" roared the man, with the dark lantern, flashing his revolver into view.

Two whip-like reports mingled almost as one.

Nick had caught on to the burglar's action, and, moving his hand a few inches, fired as the other pulled the trigger.

The boy felt a tug at his shoulder, as the bullet ploughed its way through the padding, but he hardly noticed it.

His own ball hit the rascal in the chest, and he fell on the floor with a sharp cry.

That was warning enough for the other, and he threw up his arms in a hurry.

"Back up against the wall," ordered Nick, sharply.

The burglar obeyed.

Nick stepped forward and looked at the wounded man.

He lay groaning dimly, with one hand clutched over the spot where the bullet had struck him.

His revolver was at his feet, and the boy picked it up.

The problem that faced Nick was how to secure the other fellow.

A piece of cord the thickness of a clothes-line lay among the tools on the floor in front of the safe.

"Drop your arms," cried the young messenger.

The burglar did so.

"Face the wall."

The man turned around, presenting his back to the boy. Nick picked up the line and walked up to him.

"Clasp your hands together behind you," said Nick, pushing the muzzle of his weapon against the base of the fellow's brain.

The touch of the cold steel made the man obey in a hurry.

Nick stepped back, placed the weapon in his pocket, and rapidly formed a slip-noose.

This he slipped over the chap's hands and pulled tight at the wrists.

A turn or two, and a knot rendered the burglar practically helpless.

There was still a foot of slack, and Nick pulled up a heavy chair and tied the man to it.

"I guess it would puzzle him to get loose very soon," thought the brave boy. "Now I'll be able to look for the girl who screamed for help."

He looked into the other rooms on that floor, but no one was in them.

Then he went upstairs and opened the doors there.

One door only was fast, and Nick found the key turned in it.

He opened it and struck a match.

He saw a well-furnished sitting-room, with an alcove containing a bed off of it.

In the center of the apartment, bound to a chair, and gagged, was a lovely girl who looked badly frightened.

She was daintily attired in a soft, clinging house gown, and was clearly not one of the servants of the house.

Nick turned on the electric globe, and then took the gag from the prisoner's mouth.

"Brace up, miss. I am a friend," he said, reassuringly.

"Oh!" she exclaimed. "Those men—what has become of them? I heard a shot on the first floor below this. Did one of them fire at you?"

"Yes, and I fired at him at the same time. He is now lying wounded on the floor of the room where the safe is."

"My father's library."

"And the other is bound a prisoner to a chair. I captured them both, and the police must be notified to come and take them away. Is there a telephone in the house?"

"Yes, on my father's desk in the library."

"I didn't notice it," said Nick, as he finally released the girl from the chair. "Were you alone in the house, miss, when you were surprised by those rascals?"

"Yes. My father and mother went to the theater, but I could not go as I had a severe headache, which seems to have been frightened away by my terrible experience. How came you to enter the house?"

"I was passing up the street when I heard you scream and call once for help. I felt something was wrong, investigated, and found that the kitchen door had been forced, probably with a jimmy. I was satisfied thieves were in the house, and I decided to continue my investigations."

He then told her all that happened in the library from the moment he had accidentally turned on the electric lights.

"What a brave boy you are!" she exclaimed, admiringly. "You must tell me your name."

"Nick Norton. May I ask yours?"

"Jessie Scott."

"Where are the servants?"

"It is the maid's night off. And the cook was allowed to go and visit her sister, who is ill. That's why I was wholly alone at the time I was attacked."

"Will you come to the library with me. The men are there, but they can't do you any harm now."

Miss Scott hesitated, and then said she would go.

"I feel I shall be safe wherever you are," she said.

The entered the library together.

The man on the floor was still groaning with pain, whilst the other was silent and sullen.

The girl pointed to the telephone, and Nick lost no time in calling up Central and requesting to be connected with the nearest station-house.

The operator put him in communication with the Thirty-sixth Precinct, and he told the officer at the desk the condition of things at the house on Boston road, where he was.

"What's the number of this house, Miss Scott?" he asked.

The young lady told him, and he transmitted it to the police.

He was told that a patrol wagon and a bunch of policemen would be up right away.

While waiting for them to arrive, he engaged the girl in conversation, and learned that her father was a merchant in the leather district.

He told her that he was a Wall Street messenger; that he lived in Jersey City, and explained how it was he came to the Bronx that evening.

In due time the police appeared, took charge of the burglars, and carried them away, Nick and Miss Scott being directed to appear at the Sixth District Police Court in the morning to press the case against the rascals.

"There is no use of my keeping my engagement with my friend at this hour," said Nick, after the police had taken their prisoners away, and he and Miss Scott were left alone together. "I will remain with you until your parents get back from the show, and then I'll go home."

"They will not return before half-past eleven," said the girl. "That will be too late for you to go all the way to Jersey City. You are welcome to remain all night, for we have two spare rooms, either of which is at your service. It will be convenient for you to go to court after breakfast, instead of you having to take a long trip uptown again for that purpose."

Nick thanked her for the invitation, and said if her parents endorsed it he would remain with pleasure.

"I am sure my father and mother will be only too glad to have you stay after what you have done for me, not to speak of saving the house from being robbed," said the girl.

Nick found Jessie Scott an uncommonly fine girl, and he liked her better the longer he was in her company.

He couldn't have received a better introduction to her, and it was easy to see that she was much taken with him.

Girls always admire a brave and manly boy, and Nick was easily both.

The maid returned about ten, and Jessie told her all that had happened during her absence.

She was quite staggered by the news.

It was a quarter of twelve when Mr. and Mrs. Scott got home, and they were astonished and concerned when they learned what had happened.

Needless to say that Nick was warmly thanked and praised for his services.

He remained all night and took breakfast with the family next morning, then accompanied by Mr. Scott, he and Jessie went to court.

The wounded burglar was not in shape to appear at the bar, but his pal pleaded not guilty.

After hearing the testimony the magistrate held him for the action of the Grand Jury.

Then Nick, after promising to call on the Scotts at an early date, took his leave of Jessie and went downtown with her father.

CHAPTER IX.

ANOTHER WINNING POINTER.

It was noon when Nick reached his office, and the cashier asked him what had detained him.

The boy gave him a brief story of his night's adventure at the Scott residence on Boston road.

"So you actually captured two burglars all by yourself?" said the cashier.

"A loaded revolver is a pretty good assistant," answered Nick.

"Yes. You shot one of them, you say?"

"I did, and he took a shot at me at the same time. His bullet tore a hole through the shoulder padding of my jacket, but I plunked him in the chest."

"You had rather a close call, I should judge. You are a pretty nervy young fellow. You demonstrated your courage the other day when you jumped in and saved Mr. Spear from being shot by Broker Dawson."

Nick laughed and remarked that he was ready to attend to business.

In a few minutes the cashier sent him out on an errand.

The errand took him to the brokerage office of Niles & Bloodgood, on Exchange Place.

He carried a note to Mr. Niles, but when he got there he found he had to wait, for the senior partner was engaged with an important visitor, and could not be disturbed.

Nick waited five minutes and then got impatient.

He went up to the office boy, who was standing near the door of Niles' room.

"Say, can't you take this note in to Mr. Niles. It's important," he said.

Nick didn't know whether the note was specially important or not, but by saying it was he thought he could wind up his errand.

The boy looked at it doubtfully.

The head boss had given him strict orders that he must not be disturbed.

"No, I can't take it in, no matter how important it is," he said.

At that moment the cashier called him over.

Nick was disgusted.

He decided to venture in himself, so he knocked and opened the door without waiting to be invited to enter.

Niles was seated at his desk with a stout, important looking man.

Neither noticed Nick's entrance.

"Now you understand, Niles, you're to buy every share of E. & F. in sight until I notify you to stop. Another firm will attend to the selling afterward."

"All right. I'll get on the job at once," replied Niles, briskly.

Nick realized right away that he had got on to a bang-up tip, and he decided to withdraw before his presence had been detected.

This he did without anybody being the wiser, and two minutes later the stout man came out and left the office, which gave the young messenger the chance to go in and deliver his note.

Niles read it, said "All right," and Nick took his departure.

He was highly elated over the pointer he had caught hold of, and determined to buy as many shares of E. & F. as he could put up the margin for.

An hour later the chance came his way, and, going to the little bank, he gave in his order for 700 shares.

The order was 'phoned to the bank's representative at the board-room, and the stock was bought at the market price of 115.

"This is another deal that is going to make the dollars for me," he said to himself. "I ought to double my money, and that will be a good haul."

He decided that it would be the right thing to put his friend Sherwood on to the tip, but he didn't see Roger till after business hours, and then he found him down at the door waiting for him.

"Say, why didn't you keep your engagement with me last night?" asked Roger. "It was a mighty good show that you missed."

Nick explained how it came about that he failed to keep the date, and Roger was much astonished.

"Caught two burglars, did you?" he said. "I didn't see anything in the paper about it."

"It was in, all right, only you didn't look in the right place. The story with additions will probably be repeated in the afternoon editions."

"You seem to be trying to keep in the limelight. It is only a few days ago that you distinguished yourself by saving your boss from being shot by a crazy trader, and now you have captured two burglars in the act of robbing a house."

"Well, never mind about that. I've got a tip to pass on to you. It's just as sure a winner as the A. & B. one, and you want to take it in."

"What's the tip?"

Nick told him, and explained how he got hold of it.

"That's good enough for me," said Roger. "I'm on with both feet."

"How many shares can you put up for?"

"Twenty-five."

"Well, you'll double your money, all right."

"That will suit me to the queen's taste. You must be worth four or five thousand yourself, for you made over \$3,000 on that Golden Giant deal."

"Yes, I'm worth all of that."

"If you're going to put it all on E. & F., you'll win a roll as large as a house."

"I have it up already."

"Is that so? You didn't lose any time."

"I believe in taking time by the forelock. That's one of the secrets of success, in my opinion."

"I can't do anything this afternoon—it's too late; but I hope to find the chance to get in to-morrow."

The boys entered a quick-lunch house, and then Nick started to talk about Miss Jessie Scott, and what a lovely girl she was.

"Mashed on her, are you?" grinned Roger.

"She's the daughter—the only one—of a rich hide and leather merchant in the 'Swamp,' so it won't do me any good to get mashed on her. She's several pegs higher in

the social swim than I am, and that raises a kind of barrier between us, don't you know?"

"Oh, I don't know. Look what you did for her and the family? You rescued her from an unpleasant situation, and you saved the house from being cleaned out by the burglars. That ought to put you on a solid basis with all hands. I suppose you have been invited to call some evening?"

"Yes; but they could hardly do less than that under the circumstances. They all feel under an obligation to me, and no doubt they'll treat me fine when I call, but that doesn't give me the right to make myself too friendly with Miss Scott."

"Ho! If I were in your shoes, and I saw the girl took to me, I'd go the limit with her, bet your life. It's the proper caper these days for a fellow to try and catch a rich wife. You've got an unexpected chance. Make the most of it. I would, you can gamble on it."

Whatever opinion Nick really had on the subject he didn't care to discuss it, so he changed the conversation, and soon afterward the boys separated, each going his own road toward home.

Several days elapsed before there was any change of importance in the price of E. & F., and then it dropped several points.

That didn't worry Nick any, for he didn't believe it would go down far enough to wipe him out.

It did go down six points, and then recovered by degrees, and went to 117.

Next day it went to 120.

Nick asked Mr. Spear what he thought about the rise in E. & F.

"I guess it's about as high now as it will go," said the broker.

"I heard there was a syndicate behind it that intended to boom it up ten or fifteen points."

"Who told you that?"

Nick told his boss what he heard the stout man tell Trader Niles.

Mr. Spear was impressed by the information, for he thought he recognized the stout gentleman as a big operator who was known to be connected with various syndicates.

After considering the matter, he bought a bunch of E. & F. himself.

The stock continued to go up, and attracted a lot of attention at the Exchange.

Brokers bought and sold batches of it on a slight advance, though many held on to see how high it would go.

On Friday it boomed up to 130 before noon.

Nick wanted to sell at that figure, but was kept so busy that he couldn't reach the little bank till two o'clock, when the price was up to 134 3-8.

He told the margin clerk to sell him out at once, and this was done inside of fifteen minutes.

When Nick and Roger met that afternoon and compared notes, the latter said he had sold at 130 and made \$375.

"Well, I sold at 134 3-8, and I've made something over \$13,000," said Nick.

"Gee! You've done well. How much are you worth now?"

"Twenty thousand dollars."

"And I'm worth only a measly \$625," said Roger, with a wry look.

"Oh, well, that's \$600 more than I was worth the day we went fishing in Jamaica Bay," said Nick.

CHAPTER X.

A NIGHT ADVENTURE.

The fact that he was worth so much money, which he had made all himself out of a start of \$600, made Nick feel somewhat important, and he ventured to address a note to Miss Jessie Scott, asking her what evening it would be convenient to her to have him call.

She answered in a daintily-written note, stating that she would be pleased to see him on the following Wednesday.

He went to her house that night and received a warm welcome, both from the girl and her parents.

He spent a very pleasant evening there, and when he left was invited to repeat his visit at an early date, which he promised to do.

It was between half-past ten and eleven when he left the house, and he had to walk across several blocks to reach an elevated station.

He had covered half of the distance, and was approaching a cross street, when he noticed a large touring automobile drawn up in front of the side door of a corner saloon.

Suddenly out from the door came a rush of men, dragging another roughly along.

"Help!" shouted the man, trying to fight the others off.

"Choke him off, Daly, or we'll have the police on us," said one of the bunch, as they forced their man toward the auto.

"Help!" cried the unfortunate again.

Biff! One of the crowd slugged him in the face.

That silenced the maltreated one, and he was hustled into the machine.

Nick's first idea was to jump to the man's assistance, but the odds of six opponents didn't promise much success.

His approach had not been noticed in the general excitement, and feeling that his single efforts would be useless against that bunch, Nick decided to cross the street in place of passing the crowd.

He slipped behind the auto when, noticing the pair of heavy springs on which the rear of the body of the machine rested, a sudden idea occurred to him.

He sprang up on one of the springs, straddled over to the other, and gripped the under end of the cover, forcing the yielding material up with his head.

Hardly had he got a firm hold when the auto started off with a sudden plunge, and was soon speeding up the next street at a rapid pace.

Nick, whose power of vision was entirely shut out by the cover, which settled about his head like a kind of hood, had no idea where he was being carried to.

However, he realized that he was in for an adventure of some kind, in which he hoped he would be able to help the prisoner in the machine.

Block after block was reeled off at a pace that was faster than the speed regulations permitted, but no policeman turned up to interfere.

The houses began to grow wider apart, and in some places not one was to be seen in a whole block.

The auto went on for several miles, and then turned down a dark road, where its speed was greatly reduced.

At length it came to a stop beside the cutting of a new railroad.

"Have you got the bonds?" he heard a voice say.

"Yes. I have them all right."

"Then we'll dump him out here. If he falls into the cut trying to find his way back to town that will be his funeral. If he doesn't, so much the better for him. We'll lie low for a few days in the roadhouse, and Griggs will take the machine to the police station and tell them he found it standing along the road."

Nick didn't know whether to alight and look after the man, whom he judged was unconscious, or stay where he was and track the bond thieves to the road-house where they were going.

He decided that the latter course promised the best results.

Accordingly, he hung on where he was while the two men removed their victim from the auto and laid him in a recumbent position against a pile of dirt.

Then they got in, turned the machine partly around, and started up a long and dark road, which led them into a broad, smooth avenue, where they increased their speed.

After a run of a mile or more the machine was turned into the yard of a road-house.

Nick crouched low and took a look as the machine stopped.

Judging the men had reached their destination, he dropped off and backed away into the darkness.

He saw the two men enter the house by a back door, and as soon as they had disappeared he sneaked up to a window near the door.

He saw the men talking to a red-faced man, in shirt sleeves, who seemed to be the proprietor.

Presently the three left the room, and Nick, with the same pluck he had shown when he tackled the burglars in the Scott residence, opened the door and entered.

He went to the other door through which the men had passed and saw that it opened on an entry.

He crossed and peered through the keyhole of the door opposite.

He looked into the public room of the road-house.

The red-faced man was behind the bar handing out drinks to the other two.

Nick watched them for some minutes, and then he heard some one enter the room behind him.

That placed him between two fires, as it were.

He didn't care to be discovered in the house, so he rushed up the back entry stairs to wait up there till he could make another move.

Presently the two men who had come in the auto came out into the entry with a lamp and started up the stairs.

That placed Nick in a bad fix, and to escape it he darted into a room at hand.

He stumbled up against a bed, and for fear the men might come in there he crawled under it.

He was none too quick, for the men entered and placed the lamp on a small table.

"Turn the key," he heard one of them say.

The man addressed did so.

"Now," said the speaker, "let us look those bonds over. They're plain coupon Government threes, so we'll have no trouble in selling them. It won't do to offer them in Wall Street, for fear we might be asked some unpleasant questions, for this night's business will be in all the papers tomorrow. I think Boston or Philadelphia will be safe enough to work them off; or we might go to Chicago to make sure."

Nick peaked out from under the bed and watched the men examine the bonds.

"Ten \$1,000 bonds. That isn't bad. We'll live swell for awhile on the proceeds, but to keep Griggs in good humor, and because he's a good friend and pal, we must send him \$1,000," said the same speaker.

"Where shall we keep these for safety until we go away?" asked the other.

"We'll wrap them in a piece of newspaper and put them inside that small stove. They'll be safe there, for it will be some moons before a fire is lighted in it."

"All right," said his companion. "Whatever you say goes with me."

Nick, from his hiding place, saw them place the package in the stove.

"When is Griggs going to take the machine to the police?"

"First thing in the morning before we are up."

The men then disrobed, blew out the lamp, and got into bed.

Nick lay very quiet for a long time to give the men the chance to get asleep.

They talked for awhile in bed, and then they became quiet, and their deep breathing convinced him that they were wrapped in slumber.

With much caution he crawled out from his hiding spot and made his way to the stove.

Opening the little door, he thrust in his hand, felt of the package and drew it out with a flutter of triumph.

His next move was to escape from the room.

He removed his shoes, unlocked the door, took the key out, passed out on the landing and locked the door on the other side, removing the key.

"I'll bet they won't know what that means when they wake up in the morning and find that they can't get out, except by dropping from the window," he chuckled.

He made his way down the stairs.

No light came from under either door, so Nick concluded that the house was closed for the night.

He didn't know what time it was, but judged it was after one.

He hated to think of the condition his best suit was in after his spell under the bed, but he guessed the man who owned the bonds would make that all right, if he didn't do better.

"I ought to get something worth while for recovering the \$10,000 worth of bonds," he thought. "Only for me the owner might have been out the whole value of the securities, for they appear to be negotiable on sight from what the men said."

He opened the door of the back room, which he had noticed was a living apartment, and slipped in.

All was dark there, but he ventured to strike a match to see his way to the door.

It was locked and bolted, but the turning of the key and the shooting of the bolt was the matter of a moment.

Then he put on his shoes, opened the door and stepped out into the early morning air.

In less than a minute he was standing in the road.

He had a long walk before him, and to make the matter worse he had no idea in what part of Westchester county he was, but it must be some miles above the Bronx.

There was nothing for him to do but to put his best foot forward and get over the ground as fast as he could.

He had walked about half a mile when he heard an automobile coming full tilt on behind him.

His first thought was to hail it and try to get a lift, but it occurred to him that it was possible the rascals had discovered their loss and were chasing him.

This hardly seemed probable, but sooner than take any chances he stepped behind a convenient tree and let the auto pass.

There were four people, two of them women, in it.

He saw that he couldn't have got a ride, anyway.

He resumed his tramp, and at length reached a point where the road turned toward the southeast.

Alternately walking and resting, he kept on till the houses became more frequent, and he believed he had reached the Bronx at last.

It was a lonesome tramp, in an unfamiliar region, but Nick was too plucky a lad to make any squeal.

When his watch told him that it was four o'clock, he was walking along a thickly settled section, but he had no better idea of his position than at any other time, except that he was satisfied he was in the greater city.

So far he had not encountered a soul, except the automobile party.

He wished he might meet a policeman, so as to get definite directions that would land him at an elevated station, but the guardians of the law kept out of his way.

At last he saw a man coming toward him.

He was a workingman returning from his night job. Nick stopped him and asked for information.

He found he was walking parallel almost with Third avenue, which was a few blocks away.

A quarter of an hour later he was on the platform of a station waiting for a train, which ran about every fifteen minutes.

It was close on to daybreak by this time, and he would reach home about the time his mother got up to get breakfast.

When he arrived at the City Hall station it was broad daylight, and he had slept most of the way down in the train.

At half-past six he walked into the house and found his mother getting up.

She was surprised to see him at that early hour.

He changed his clothes, had a good wash, and joined her in the kitchen.

While she was getting breakfast he told her about his night's adventures.

He showed her the bonds, which he examined for the first time, and found they were coupon Government threes, which could readily be sold without question to any broker.

"Those rascals would have made a fine haul out of them," he said to his mother. "I ought to get something handsome for recovering them for the owner."

"How are you going to find the owner? You don't even know his name," she said.

"The robbery is bound to be reported to the police, and by communicating with them I'll be able to connect with the owner."

On his way to New York he bought his usual morning paper, and looked it over to see if it had the story of the robbery.

It had nothing about it, which showed the case had not been reported in time to reach the papers for publication.

He reached the office about the usual time, as bright as though he had had a full night's rest.

The package of bonds was in his pocket.

He intended to turn the securities over to Mr. Spear, and explain how they had come into his possession.

Before he had the chance to do that he was sent out by the cashier on his first errand.

CHAPTER XI.

IN THE LIMELIGHT AGAIN.

When he got back he was sent out right away again, and on his return he found that Mr. Spear had arrived but was busy with a visitor.

The next time he went out a newsboy was selling what was called the early afternoon edition of an evening paper.

It was then about ten o'clock.

Nick bought a paper and looked it over at the office he was sent to.

On the first page was the story of the bond robbery under a big scare heading.

The real facts were rather meager, but had been made the most of by the writer.

They had been furnished by the man who had been robbed.

His name was Edward Griswold, and he had walked into a Bronx station-house about three o'clock, half dazed from the effects of a drug which had been administered to him in the automobile.

All he could tell was that he had gone into the saloon to take a drink, and got into conversation there with two men who had persuaded him to go into a back room for a game of cards.

They played for awhile, when four other men came in and started a row.

In the midst of it he was hustled outside by the side entrance and shoved into an automobile which started off at once.

A handkerchief was pressed over his face and he lost his senses.

When he came to himself he was lying on a pile of dirt near what seemed to be an extensive excavation.

He discovered that the bonds he had had in his pocket were gone, so he started to find a station-house, tell his story and report his loss.

That was the whole of his story, and it furnished no clue to the thieves.

When Nick returned to the office he found his employer disengaged.

"I'd like to talk with you, Mr. Spear," he said.

"Proceed," smiled the broker.

"To begin with, read that," and Nick handed him the afternoon paper, pointing at the story of the bond robbery.

Spear did so, and then remarked that it had been a nervy piece of business.

"I should say so, sir. Well, I saw it done."

"You did!" exclaimed the broker, in some surprise.

"Yes, sir. I was up in the Bronx last evening visiting at the Scotts. I left there about half-past ten and started to cross over to Third avenue to get a downtown elevated train. I was close to the saloon mentioned in that story when the man was dragged out at the side door and shoved into a waiting auto."

"Indeed. Would you be able to identify any of the men if you saw them again?"

"Only the two who carried Griswold off in the machine and pinched the bonds from him."

"They are the most important. You will have to furnish the police with their description."

"I'll be glad to do it, and I can also tell them where the men are likely to be found if they haven't already skipped off."

"That will be a valuable clue. The bonds may be recovered."

"They have already been recovered."

"How do you know? The paper doesn't say so."

"Nobody knows that but me."

"How so?"

"Because I have the bonds in my pocket."

"You have!" cried the astonished broker, with an accent on the "you."

"Yes, sir. Here they are," and Nick laid the package on his employer's desk.

"How came you to get hold of them, Nick?" asked Spear.

"It's quite a story, and as it's an important one, I'll have to ask your attention for a few minutes."

"Go ahead."

Nick went ahead and told all he went through from the time he jumped on behind the auto till he made his escape from the road-house with the bonds in his possession.

Spear listened with interest and some wonder at the pluck of his messenger.

"You are certainly a most astonishing lad, Nick," was his comment at the conclusion of the story. "About one person in a thousand would have matched your exploit under the same conditions. I'll communicate with the police at once, but whether they'll be able to reach the road-house in time to capture those rascals is a question. The chances are when those scamps got up this morning, found themselves locked in the room, and the package of bonds gone, they got away from the house as fast as they could, lest their immediate arrest follow."

"As I can swear that the red-faced man, whom I judge was Griggs, the proprietor of the road-house, was in with

them, the police should take him in as an accomplice after the fact."

"They probably will," said the broker, as he connected with Police Headquarters.

Spear told the officer at the end of the wire that his messenger boy had witnessed the assault made on Griswold, had followed the men to the railroad cut, where they left after robbing him of the bonds, and afterward to a road-house up in Westchester county, where through strategy he got the securities away from the men, and they were now in his office.

"The boy is here and will give you all the facts over the wire," concluded the broker.

Nick took up the 'phone and told his story just as he had narrated it to his employer.

The officer asked him a number of questions and then told him that a man would be down to see him, and to get the stolen bonds.

Nick gave as good a description of the two rascals as he could, and also described the man he believed to be Griggs.

He gave a general idea of the direction and distance that the road-house stood from the point in the railroad cut where Griswold had been left, and the officer had little doubt about locating it.

In about half an hour a detective appeared and asked for Mr. Spear.

After he had interviewed the broker, and got the package of stolen bonds, he asked for Nick.

"The boy was out, but the sleuth waited till he got back.

He asked Nick to go over his story again, and the boy did.

"Could you identify any of the other men if they were lined up with a dozen others?" he asked Nick.

"I might possibly recognize one of them, but it is very doubtful. It was dark and the whole bunch were struggling and squirming in a mass. If I hadn't mounted the rear of the auto on the impulse of the moment, the chance to do so would have been lost," replied the young messenger.

"You're a smart and plucky lad. You've got the right stuff in you for the makings of a detective," said the sleuth, with a grim smile.

"I have no ambition to shine in that line," laughed Nick. The officer went away.

Half an hour afterward a reporter came in to see Nick.

While he was giving the newspaper man some points another came in.

In fact, Nick had the pleasure of entertaining four of the newsgatherers.

The later editions of all the evening papers had the story of the recovery of the stolen bonds, and Nick Norton was the central figure in it.

At four o'clock Nick found Roger waiting for him at the door downstairs.

Nick did not enlighten him, for it tickled him to think of the surprise that awaited Roger when he read the story in the newspapers.

They walked up toward Broadway together.

"Extry! Extry! Full account of the great bond robbery!" cried a newsboy.

"You heard about that robbery, didn't you, Nick?" said

Roger. "It was in the early afternoon editions. I suppose there have been developments since."

"Yes, I read the story, but it contained only a part of the facts. The more important ones had not reached either the police or the newspaper offices at that time," said Nick.

"Then you've read the extra. Here, boy, give me a copy."

"No, I haven't read any account but the first one."

"Then you got your information from some other source, eh?"

"Yes, I got it from the fountain-head."

"Who could know more about it than the man who was robbed, except the rascals who pulled off the game? His story was printed in full."

"Well, if you read the extra maybe you'll learn how I happen to know all about the robbery."

Roger stared at Nick, not quite comprehending his meaning.

As they started up Broadway, Roger glanced over the scare heading, and then at the reading that followed.

Before he had gone very far, he saw his friend's name staring him in the face.

"Suffering giglamps!" he ejaculated. "What does this mean?"

He went on reading with avidity.

"Great jawbones, Nick! This never can mean you!" he cried.

"My name is in the paper, is it?" laughed Nick, greatly tickled over his friend's surprise.

"Say, were you mixed up in this?" asked Roger, almost incredulously.

"Nothing surer, old chap."

"And you never said a word about it when we met in front of the office building. Why didn't you?"

"I wanted to treat you to a little surprise."

"Well, if you don't take the cake! How in thunder is it that you're always getting into these adventures that brings you before the public?"

"Just my luck, I suppose."

"This is the third time running that you've done something unusual. Tell me all about it."

Read the paper, and if there are any missing links I can supply I'll do it."

Roger read the story through, and then fired question after question at Nick.

When they parted at Cortlandt street, Roger was full of wonder at the pluck of his friend, and he couldn't talk about anything else when he got home.

Nick carried an extra home for his mother to read, and his sisters when they returned home from work, though it was likely they would have read it themselves on their way.

Although it is said that a person is never regarded as a hero by his intimates, there are exceptions, and Nick was looked on as a kind of hero that evening by his family.

"You ought to get a reward for recovering his bonds," said his sister Bessie.

"If he hands me some substantial evidence of his appreciation I won't turn it down," replied Nick.

"I should hope not. You have fairly won it by your pluck."

"Well, good people, I'm going to bed to make up the sleep I lost last night in a good cause. If any one calls to see me, just sidetrack him, will you?"

With those words Nick retired to his room, and was soon fast asleep, and he did not wake up till his mother called him to breakfast next morning.

CHAPTER XII.

AFTER MONTANA COPPER.

When Nick returned from the first errand next morning he found a gentleman waiting to see him.

"My name is Edward Griswold," said the visitor.

"Oh! You are the man who was robbed of the bonds," said Nick.

"I am that person, and I have called to see the plucky boy who recovered them, and to express my grateful appreciation of your services, young man," said Griswold, continuing his handshake.

"You are quite welcome to what I did for you."

"And in return I want to do something for you."

"You can buy me a new suit of clothes to replace the ones I put on the blink while wallowing under the bed in the room at the road-house."

"That's a mere bagatelle. You shall have the best suit that a good tailor can turn out. In addition, I want you to accept my check for \$1,000."

"That is too much, Mr. Griswold. If you'll cut that in half I'll accept it."

"But \$1,000 will be a handy sum to bank against the future."

"I don't need it. I have made several thousand dollars out of the market in the last few months, and expect to make several more before I am entitled to cast my first vote. If you want to give me \$500 I'll take it, but that is the limit."

Griswold saw he was in earnest, so he wrote out his check for \$500.

"If you ever want a favor, call and see me, and if it's within my power I'll oblige you," he said, handing Nick his business card, which showed that he was a lawyer, with offices at 115 Broadway.

"Thank you, sir. I'll bear your offer in mind," said Nick.

Griswold then shook hands with him and went away.

A policeman came in a little later to take him up to Headquarters to identify Griggs, who had been arrested.

The two thieves, he learned, had not been found.

The automobile used by the crooks had been stolen.

Griggs handed it over to the police before he found out that his friends had been locked in their rooms, and the bonds taken by some mysterious person whose identity was not established until he (Griggs) had been arrested and taken to Headquarters.

Broker Spear allowed Nick to go with the officer, and he found no difficulty in picking the landlord of the road-house out of a bunch of men.

That was all that was required of him then, and he returned to Wall Street.

In the meantime the detectives were out hunting for the bond crooks.

For several days Nick found himself a somewhat famous character in the Street, but the interest he excited gradually evaporated as other matters bobbed up to interest the brokers.

A week elapsed and the rise in G. & H. attracted his attention and interest.

It was not a very important stock, though it was dealt in right along.

The par value of its shares was \$100, but they were selling at 64.

Nick bought 1,000 on margin, with the idea of making a quick sale on a narrow margin of profit.

He had no idea why it was rising, and he didn't believe it would go high.

Considering that he was not able to watch the market as closely as such a speculation required, he was taking a considerable risk in going into it.

But he was as plucky in dealing with the market as he was in his limelight exploits, and Dame Fortune, admiring his nerve, stood by him.

G. & H. went up something over five points inside of thirty-six hours, and Nick sold out and made \$5,000 clear profit.

It was a case where he had actually won by pluck; but then pluck was his long suit.

It wasn't long before he exercised his pluck in a different direction.

A builder bought a plot of ground not far from where he lived, and put up half a dozen buildings on which he had to raise a heavy sum by mortgage as he proceeded.

When the buildings were finished he put them on the market.

Buyers proved to be scarce, and the mortgage interest on the six houses proving too heavy to carry, he offered three of the houses at a big sacrifice.

Nick learned of the chance and got his mother to buy them for him.

Although he undoubtedly got hold of a bargain, it was really his pluck that brought it his way, for the chance of selling the houses was not very good.

He placed them in the hands of an agent, and at the end of three months sold one, which was one better than the builder.

Nick had the other two photographed, and he sent the pictures, with his price, to several agents.

Inside of another month he had got rid of them, and he averaged a profit of \$1,000 on each, clear of all the expenses of the transaction.

During the four months he had been unable to put through any deal in the market, as most of his capital was in the houses, and the \$5,000 he had left over he did not care to take any chances with, for he figured he might need it before his real estate speculation was finished up.

Now that his money was free again, he took a fresh interest in stocks.

He learned on good authority that great things would soon be doing in Montana Copper.

It was selling around \$10 a share, and Nick decided that he had the pluck to risk \$20,000 of his good money in the stock.

That would buy 2,000 shares outright, which was the

only only real sane way to buy stocks, for then you got something for your money, and no matter how low the price might go, you could not be wiped out, but you could hold on till it recovered its normal value.

Nick left his order at the little bank.

He heard nothing from the bank for several days, and then he received word that 800 shares was all that the bank's broker had been able to buy at the market price.

If he was willing to pay \$11 a share the bank could probably get 200 more.

Nick telephoned the cashier to pay \$11, and the 200 shares were bought at that.

"There must be a boom coming to account for the scarcity of the stock," Nick thought. "I wish I could get hold of that other 1,000."

A day or two later he learned that an old man named Lindley, who lived up in an old-fashioned house in Westchester county, had some Montana Copper.

How much of it he had, or whether or not he would sell, his informant could not say.

"I guess I'll go up and see him to-morrow afternoon," considered Nick.

As the next day was Saturday, and he would get off about one, he called up Engle & Hartford's office and asked if Roger Sherwood was in.

He was, and he came to the 'phone.

"Who's this?" he said.

"Nick."

"Oh, it's you. What do you want to tell me?"

"I'm going up in Westchester to-morrow afternoon, and I want to know if you will go along."

"What fun do you expect to find there?"

"I'm going on a bit of private business, but there is no telling what adventure we may run across. You might get a chance to get into the limelight yourself."

"Excuse me, I am not looking for newspaper notoriety."

"Then you won't go?"

"Yes, I will, if nothing prevents. Wait for me at the entrance after you get off to-morrow, if you don't find me waiting for you."

"All right, old man. Good-by."

Nick hung up the receiver and returned to his seat.

On the following day Nick and Roger started for the home of Mr. Lindley.

They took a New York Central train on the Harlem Division of the road and went as far as Hawthorn Station, where they alighted.

Mr. Lindley lived a mile or so from the station, along a country road, and the boys were fortunate in getting a lift on a farm wagon the entire distance.

Walking up to the old mansion, Nick asked for the owner.

"That's my name," said the man the boys had taken for the gardener.

He had on an old, antiquated straw hat, old clothes, and his face looked as sunburned as a farmer's.

"I was told down in Wall Street that you owned some shares of Montana Copper," said Nick, "and as I wanted to buy some, I thought maybe you'd sell yours cheap."

"You wanted to buy it, eh?" said Lindley, with the accent on the "you."

"Yes, sir."

"Can't you buy all you want in Wall Street?"

"Yes, if I was willing to give more than the market price; but I'm not."

"I think it's ruling at \$10."

"That's right," said Nick, pulling out that day's market report and showing Lindley that \$10 was offered and \$11 asked for Montana Copper.

"Then the market price is really \$11," said the man.

"I'd like to buy it for \$10. If I gave \$11 for it there is no certainty that it won't drop to \$10, or even \$9, on Monday."

"It might go up to \$12."

"I think that is doubtful."

"How many shares did you want to buy?"

"Any part of 1,000."

"Have you got \$10,000 to invest in the stock?"

"I have. Have you got 1,000 shares?"

"That's just what I've got."

"Will you sell them for the price I offered?"

"Yes, for cash."

"I'll give you \$1,000 down, and send the balance by express on Monday. You must have the stock ready to hand over to the express agent in return for the money. How will that do?"

"That is satisfactory to me. Come in the house and we will settle the business."

The boys followed him in.

The deal was put through, and Lindley gave Nick a receipt for the money, and a paper stating that on receipt of \$9,000 more he would deliver 1,000 shares of Montana Copper mining stock to Nick Norton's order, provided he was called upon to do so on or before the following Tuesday night.

After the business had been concluded, Lindley treated the boys to cake and blackberry wine, and they took their departure.

The sunshiny afternoon had changed to a cloudy one, and there were indications of rain, but the boys judged they could reach the station long before it did rain.

They were mistaken, however.

They had covered half the distance when the rain began to fall.

"There's a two-story shanty yonder," said Roger; "let's get under cover. Maybe the rain will let up soon."

They hurried to the shanty in question, which seemed to be deserted, and took refuge under the roof of the porch.

That side of the building being exposed to the wind, which came with the rain, the porch furnished doubtful shelter.

Nick tried the door, found it unlocked, and they entered a vacant room given over to dust and cobwebs.

The rain continuing, Roger proposed that they amuse themselves inspecting the old shack.

Nick had no objection, so they started upstairs.

The front room was as bare as the one downstairs.

They walked into the rear one and were treated to an unpleasant surprise.

Two men stepped from behind the door they had pushed open and presented revolvers at their heads.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CAPTURE OF THE BOND THIEVES.

"Gee!" ejaculated Roger, starting back in alarm.

"Back up against that wall, young fellows," said one of the men, sharply.

Nick looked hard at the two men.

Their faces appeared to be familiar to him. Where had he seen them before?

Then quick as a flash his brain responded and he remembered.

They were the bond thieves—the men he had euchiored out of their plunder.

Then came the command to back against the wall.

Nick and Roger obeyed, for they had no alternative.

"Now then, who are you, and what brings you into this house?" asked the man.

"We took refuge here from the rain," replied Nick.

"What brought you upstairs?"

"We thought we'd look around to kill time."

"Benson, go through those chaps and see what you can find."

The speaker's companion shoved his revolver in his pocket and began operations on Roger Sherwood.

The first thing he got hold of was the boy's pay envelope, which contained his wages for the week.

He coolly tore it open and counted \$8.

He shoved the money in his pocket.

Beyond a few silver coins, he found nothing else of value on the boy.

Then he tackled Nick.

He proved more remunerative, for his pay envelope held \$10, and he had \$12 more.

The next thing he got hold of was Nick's pocketbook, containing the receipt for \$1,000, and the sales-agreement.

The rascal did not think them worth reading, and he shoved the pocketbook back when he found there was no money in it.

During the proceedings the other man held the revolver ready for action.

Having cleaned Nick out of all he had, including a very good watch, the fellow turned around to leave them.

Then Nick saw the butt of his revolver sticking out of his pocket.

Quick as a flash he seized it, cocked it and fired without warning at the arm of the other chap—the one which held the revolver.

The ball broke the bones of his forearm, and the weapon dropped to the floor, as he uttered a yell of pain.

Nick gave the other rascal a shove and covered him with his revolver.

"Pick up that gun, Roger, and keep an eye on the fellow I plugged," he said. "Now, you rascal," turning to the other. "Shell out our property, and be quick about it, or I'll make you a subject for the coroner."

The man hesitated with an ugly look.

Nick didn't intend to stand any nonsense, and he fired at the fellow, aiming so as to barely miss his ear.

The rascal jumped back with a cry of alarm.

"If I have to fire again I won't miss you," said Nick.

"That shot was a warning. Hand out the money and watch you took from us. Take them from him, Roger."

The man grudgingly shelled out everything to Roger.

"Put it all in your pocket, Roger. I'll ask for mine by and by. There's a line hanging from a nail yonder. Get it and tie that chap. Give me the gun while you're doing it. If he kicks up a fuss I'll put a ball in his leg."

The threat, coupled with the groans of his associate, cowed the chap and he offered no resistance while Roger bound him.

"Make a good job of it, Roger. We can't afford to take any chances with him," said Nick. "Now tie him to that upright, and he'll be safe enough, guess."

As soon as the man was well secured, Nick told his friend to look for another piece of line or a cord to tie the wounded man's ankles together.

By that time the rain had stopped.

"Now, Roger, you go on to the village and hunt up a constable," said Nick. "Tell him that you and I have caught two crooks who are wanted by the Manhattan police. Get a doctor, too, and bring them both here. I'll watch these chaps while you're away. By the way, I'll take my watch and money before you go."

In a few minutes Roger started off on his errand.

As soon as Nick was alone the bound man began to assail him with imprecations and threats.

"Cut it out," said the boy, sharply. "You're only wasting your breath. You tackled the wrong chickadiddies when you held us up. We are bad, decidedly bad, when our fur is brushed the wrong way. This isn't the first time I've met you gents, but the first time you didn't catch a view of me, though I was hanging on to the back of your auto all the way from the corner of Blank and Blank streets to your friend Griggs' road-house. Do you get me?"

"What!" roared the prisoner. "Are you the chap who got the bonds away from us?"

"I am the identical gazabo, and now I shall have the further pleasure of landing you and your pal behind the bars. What do you think about it?"

"If we had known who you were we'd have sewed your mouth up in short order," replied the fellow.

"Then I'm glad that you didn't know me."

"We'll fix you yet, young man."

"Yes, I think you will, in a horn. You'll go up the river for a spell of years. You and your pal deserve all that's coming to you, and something more on top of it."

"If we do we'll remember you when we get out," said the fellow, darkly.

"I hope you will. Just remember what I've done to you and take it as a warning. I'm only a boy now, but when you get out of prison I'll be a man, and twice as dangerous if not left alone."

"We've got friends who will attend to you while we're in the jug."

"Then your friends will stand a fair show of joining you."

"You talk big."

"Do I? No bigger than I act. You've had a sample of my style. You're not the only fellow I've sent up the river. You'll find a pair of second-story chaps up there who can

give you a good account of the way I handled them. Ponder over it."

Thus the moments flew by, and at length Roger arrived with two constables and a doctor in a wagon.

The wounded man was patched up and then the prisoners were taken to the station.

Nick told the constables that they would take the prisoners to New York and hand them over to the Manhattan authorities.

The head constable was inclined to object, and could have prevented the plucky boy from carrying out his plan, but he finally decided to let Nick have his way, as he didn't want to be bothered with the prisoners.

The village justice had gone to Albany on business, and the men could not be examined till he returned, which would necessitate feeding and watching them.

Nick represented that the men were dangerous characters, and that if the constable insisted on holding them, and they should escape, the New York police would make things sultry for him.

"But they might get away from you on the train," said the constable.

"No fear of that, but to make things more secure, hand-cuff them together."

This was done, and when the train stopped they were marched on board and placed in a double seat with the boys facing them.

They were objects of interest and curiosity to the passengers, as also were Nick and Roger.

Before starting, Nick telegraphed the chief of the Manhattan detective force that he had captured the two Griswold bond crooks, and they would arrive at the Grand Central Station by a certain train.

After that Nick did not doubt that officers would be on hand to take charge of the prisoners.

The rascals had nothing to say during the trip.

At last the train rolled into the station, and three detectives appeared looking for the prisoners.

The conductor brought them to the car where the boys were waiting for them.

Nick told his story, and the sleuths complimented him and Roger on the capture.

Then Nick told the officer that he was the boy who recovered the bonds.

That raised the lad vastly in the eyes of the detectives, for they remembered his plucky actions on the occasion of the theft.

The prisoners were carried off in the patrol wagon, and then Nick and Roger parted at the Forty-second street elevated station—Roger taking a north-bound train and Nick a City Hall one.

The Sunday morning papers had the story of the capture of the crooks, and the part the boys had taken in it was fully set forth, so that Roger had to admit he had got into the limelight himself at last, though he knew he wouldn't have done so but for his plucky friend Nick.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONCLUSION.

Before going to his office on Monday morning, Nick went to the express company that did business over the Harlem

Division of the New York Central line and arranged for the transfer of \$9,000 cash to Mr. Lindley, of Hawthorn, and the return of the 1,000 shares of Montana Copper stock, which was to be delivered to him at Mr. Spear's office.

Of course, the broker had read in the Sunday paper about Nick and his friend's exploit up in Westchester county on Saturday afternoon, and so had the cashier and the rest of the office force, and they all had something to say to the young messenger about it.

Nick and Roger had to appear against the men at the Tombs Police Court that morning, and after a brief examination the prisoners were held to await the action of the Grand Jury.

Nick naturally came to the fore again in Wall Street, and brokers generally declared that he was the most remarkable boy in the financial district, and many of them wondered what astonishing thing he would do next.

One thing the brokers were not wise to, and that was the fact that the boy had made \$25,000 in stocks within the year.

They did hear, however, about his coupe in Golden Giant, by which he had made over \$3,000, for Broker Stiles told the story around.

Nick received the Montana Copper shares on Tuesday afternoon.

Up to this time there had been no particular change in the ruling price.

The little bank had delivered the certificates to him of the 1,000 shares he had bought through that institution.

On Wednesday morning he managed to find time to leave the Lindley certificates at the company's transfer office.

He got the new certificates next day, by which time \$12 was being asked on the Curb for the stock.

That day he met Broker Dawson on the street.

The Grand Jury had just found an indictment against him for his attack on Spear, but it was understood that influence was to be used to get the District Attorney to pigeon-hole it.

Dawson had settled with Spear for the Erie shares, and the latter had taken his note for a part of the money in order to give him a chance to turn himself.

He was now struggling to do so.

On Saturday morning Montana Copper suddenly jumped to \$15, and created a lot of excitement around the Curb.

Quite a bunch of it changed hands at that price, but Nick had no idea of selling his holdings, as he believed it stood a good chance of going to \$20.

It was about noon, and Nick was in the office, having just returned from an errand, when the door opened, and, to the boy's surprise and pleasure, in walked Miss Jessie Scott, in swell togs.

He hastened to greet her, drawing up a chair for her near his own.

"This is an unexpected pleasure, Miss Scott," he said.

"I came downtown to see my father, and I thought I would drop in and see you for a few minutes," she said, with a smile. "I hope I am not taking you from your business."

"Not at all. This is Saturday and the rush is over for

the day. The exchanges are closed, and most of us are looking forward to our pay envelopes," said Nick.

"When may I expect another call from you? Your last visit culminated in a rather strenuous adventure, didn't it? I read all about it in the papers at the time. Father says you are most unusual boy. In fact, he has had a great admiration for you ever since you saved our home from being robbed."

"I'm obliged to your father for his flattering opinion."

At that moment Nick was called on to go out, so they went out together, and parted on the sidewalk after Nick had promised to call on the young lady on the coming Wednesday evening.

On Monday morning Montana Copper was the center of attraction on the Curb.

Inside of an hour it went up three points more, standing at \$18 when Roger met Nick on Broad street.

"Your copper stock is rising like fun," said Roger. "You're as lucky as they come. That thousand shares you bought for \$10 is worth \$8,000 more at this moment."

"And I've got another thousand, most of which I bought at \$10, too."

"The dickens you have! You'll be a millionaire one of these days."

"Maybe I will and maybe I won't. Most likely I won't."

"Suppose you sold out your copper shares at the present market, how much would you be worth?"

"Something over \$40,000."

"Gosh! If I were you I'd quit the messenger business and go into business for myself."

"What business?"

Roger couldn't answer that question, and as the boys had no further time to lose they separated.

When Montana copper was at \$15, Nick thought he'd sell it when it reached \$20.

It hit \$21 that day, and the prospects looked so good that the young messenger couldn't make up his mind to get out, so he held on.

Next day it boomed to \$25, and appeared to be headed for \$30.

Nick heard brokers talking about it, and all said it seemed sure to go higher.

"I'll hold it till to-morrow," thought the boy, as he walked back to his office.

When he entered Spear's room with the reply he had brought back, the broker was in conversation with a well-dressed man.

"Yes," the visitor was saying, "there'll be a break in Montana Copper before three o'clock. It will drop as quickly as it went up."

Nick's heart gave a jump.

He handed over the note and left the room.

He got his package of copper certificates from the safe and, rushing around to the little bank, he called on the cashier and told him to have them sold without delay.

Fifteen minutes later they were offered on the Curb, and went at \$26 and a fraction.

Twenty minutes after that Montana suddenly went to pieces and dropped to \$15 in a short time.

Nick felt he had had a narrow escape, and he reckoned up his total profit on the deal at \$32,000.

That made him worth \$60,000, and he felt that he was a rich young messenger.

On Wednesday evening he dressed himself with especial care and went up in the Bronx to call on Jessie Scott.

He spent such a pleasant evening that the clock struck eleven before he was aware it was so late.

He hastened to take his departure, making an arrangement to call again two weeks from that night.

As he walked across Third avenue to get a train for downtown, the sidewalk echoed his footsteps.

There were several vacant lots along his route, in one of which building operations had begun on a flat, but had been stopped by litigation.

A gang of toughs had taken possession of the cellar, and as long as they could raise the price, a beer can made periodic trips to and from a neighboring saloon.

On the night Nick was passing that way the crowd was broke, and, furthermore, they had eaten nothing all day, having been chased from the free-lunch counter of the saloon, where they bought their beer.

The result was they were in a pretty desperate humor, and ripe for any piece of roguery that promised returns.

They kept a look-out at the closed tool-house on the street line, and this chap saw Nick approaching.

He tipped the crowd off, and the bunch lay in wait for the young messenger.

They soon saw he was a boy, and they did not count on getting much out of him, but they would be satisfied if they could get enough to pay for several quarts of beer, for in that case they would also be able to secure some free-lunch.

Nick, however, was carrying his best watch and chain, easily worth \$125, besides his gold cuff buttons, worth \$20 more, also a pin easily worth \$15, and \$15 in cash.

When he saw the tool-house ahead he judged there was a building under way in the upper part of the vacant lot.

Although he did not suspect that there were any tough citizens around the place who might pounce on him unawares, he never took chances where it wasn't necessary, so before he came to the lot he crossed to the other side of the street.

This move on his part upset the plans of the gang, who were lying in wait for him, and obliged them to attack him in the open or let him pass.

Several of them started to head him off, a couple swung around to cut off his retreat, and the remaining two made a straight rush at him.

Nick saw the bunch coming for him and observed their tactics.

There were too many of them for him to make a successful fight against, so he started for the corner on the run.

A shower of stones came after him, one of which sent his hat spinning.

He chased it, and as he stooped to pick it up, two of the toughs got close enough to strike out at him with their fists.

Nick dodged their blows, and, breaking down one fellow's guard, laid him out with a corking crack on the chin.

The other chap landed on Nick's face, but the boy got back at him a moment later with an uppercut that made him see stars.

This brief scrap enabled the crowd to close in on him, and for several minutes Nick had all he could do to dodge their efforts to nail him.

He found he was cut off from the corner, so he darted in the other direction.

The fastest of the crowd cut him off that way, too.

The only thing he could do was to retreat behind the tool-house.

He realized right away that the enemy could easily take him on all sides but one, and seeing a plank running from the walk into the ground floor of the building, he rushed across it, and darted back over the loose pieces of boards scattered about.

Nick saw a ladder leading to the beams of the floor above, where work had come to a sudden stop.

Quickly he ran up it, and then seizing the ladder, drew it up after him.

That, however, would not prevent the enemy from scaling the upright side pieces forming the framework of the building, and Nick picked up a stout piece of wood to defend himself with.

At first the toughs were not certain where he had gone. One of them climbed up to reconnoiter.

It happened that he rose close to Nick, and before he saw the young messenger Nick smashed him such a clip on his head that he lost his hold and fell into the lot, where he lay without movement.

A howl went up from them, and half of them started to climb up at different points.

Then Nick, surmising that the whole bunch were together, decided to play a march on them.

He ran lightly to the front of the building.

Not a tough was in sight.

Instantly he squeezed between two of the uprights and let himself down to the plank communicating with the street.

Across this he fled like a deer, before the toughs got on to his tactics, and he was out of their reach before they got back to the street again.

In due time he arrived at the elevated station, and was soon on his way home.

If we had the space we could recount many other instances of Nick's plucky conduct in close pinches—particularly in his subsequent dealings in the stock market, which landed him winner of \$100,000 before Mr. Spear promoted him to the counting-room.

In his new line of action he was cut off from his former opportunities to speculate, and so had to give it up; but he invested his money in first mortgages, and to-day is a rich man, and the husband of Jessie Scott, all won by pluck.

Next week's issue will contain "THE CRIMSON MASK; OR, THE TREASURE OF SAN PEDRO."

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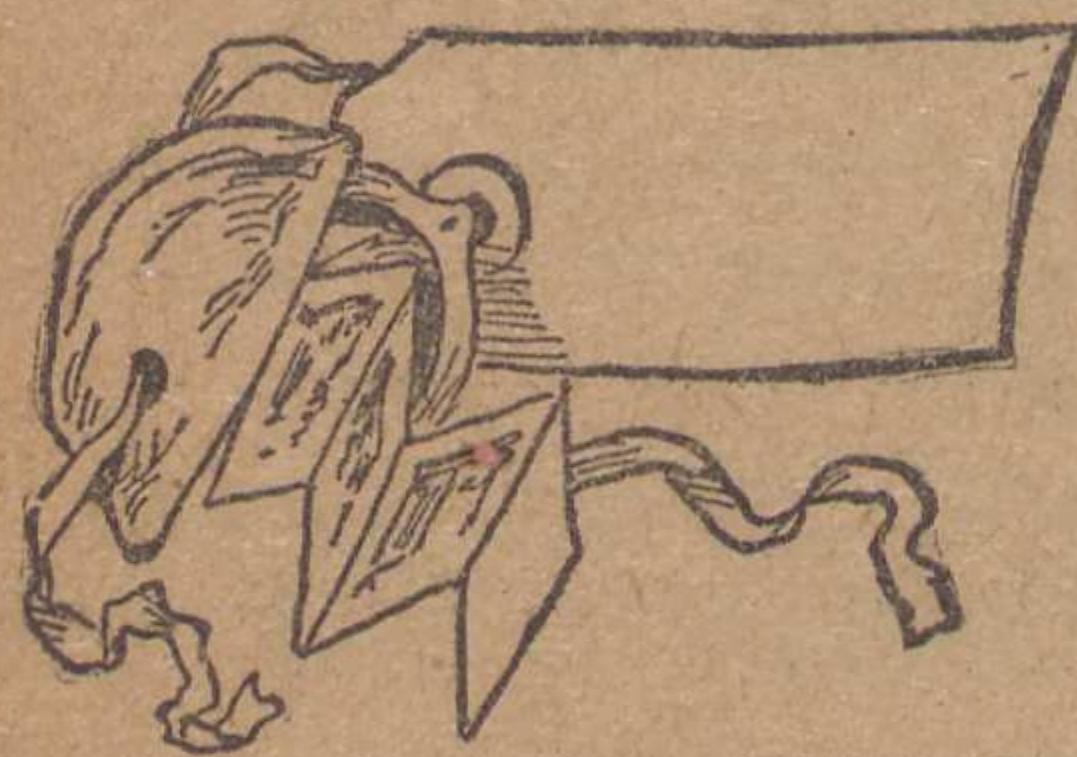
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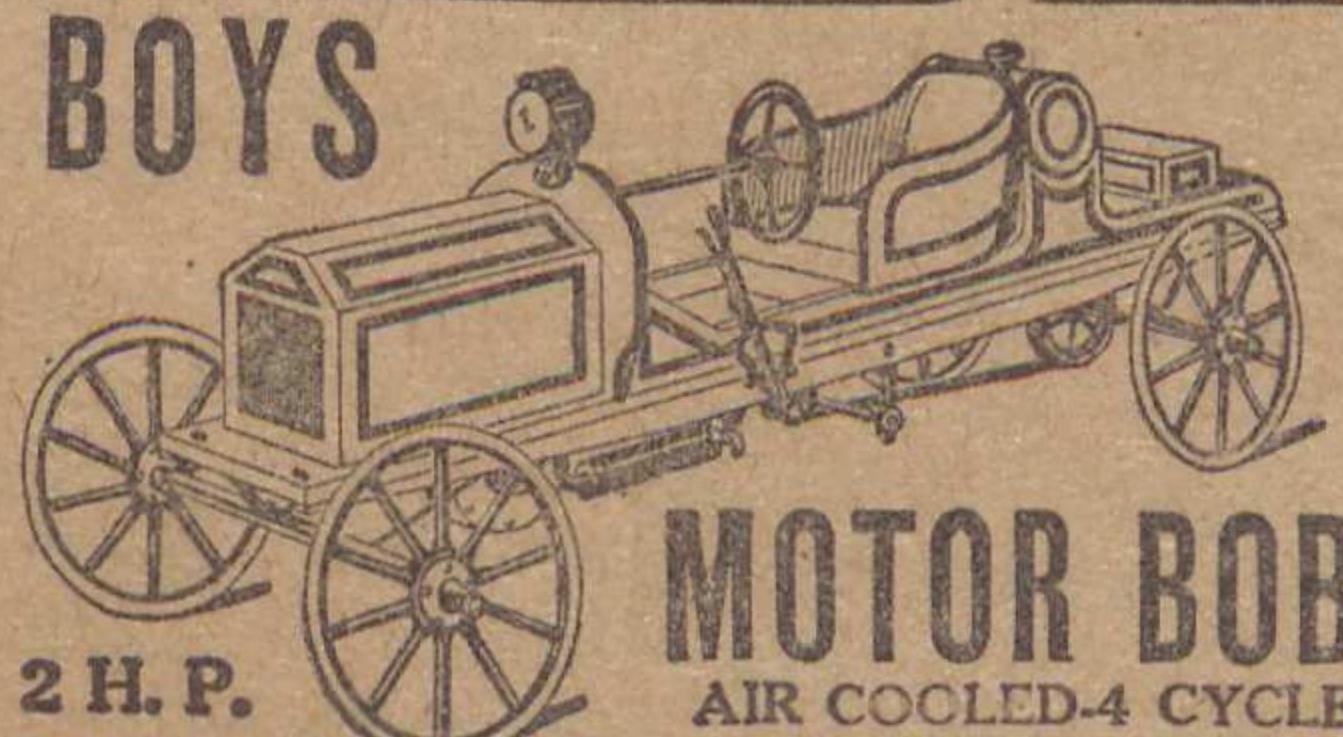
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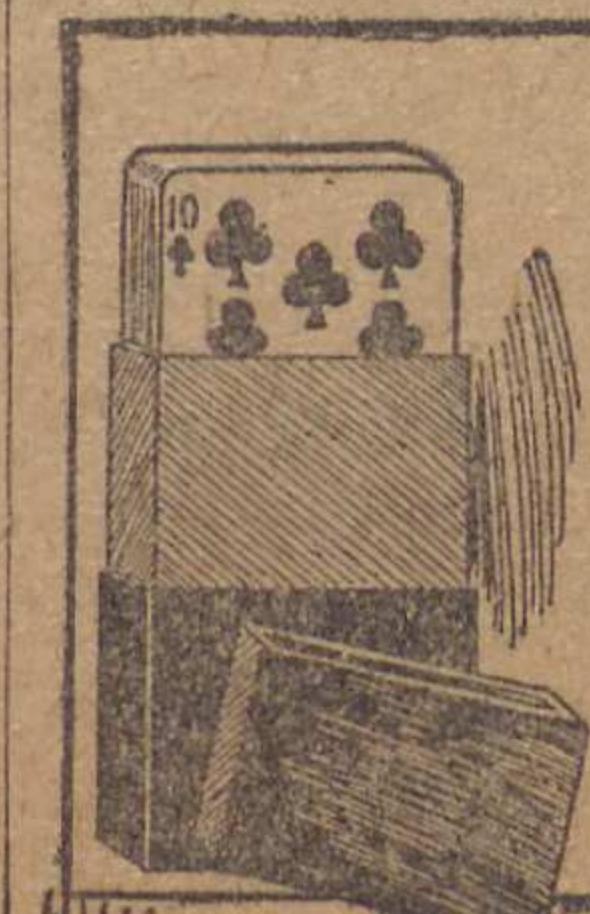
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GOOD STORIES.

Take an ordinary visiting card. One that is rather stiff is best for the purpose. Bend the ends so that you can stand it on a table. Then ask your friends to blow it over. They will find it almost impossible unless they know the trick. It consists in blowing sharply, but not too violently, on the table about an inch from either end of the card.

A young man named Shaffer, of Coatesville, Pa., claims to have invented what bicycle manufacturers have been searching for for many years—a tire which will not puncture, and which is so simple that no time is lost in the work of repair. The principle of the invention he does not divulge. It is said that he has received an offer of \$65,000 cash from a firm of bicycle manufacturers, but that he has refused the sum offered. He is holding out for \$300,000.

On Friday evening, February 27th, Miss Sarah Beatty, aged 78 years, was found dead at her home eight miles south of Kokoma, Ind. She lived alone on her forty-acre farm, and had not been seen since Tuesday. When found she was sitting in her chair where she had sat four days dead. In an envelope in her pocket was found \$100 in bills and in a corner of the clock a bundle of notes representing \$900. Packages of silver were found secreted in different parts of the house.

The iron age is commonly believed to have begun in Africa or Asia. The latest investigations prove that it was not worked in Egypt until the ninth century before the Christian era, or in Li-ya until 450 B.C., that the Semites adopted its use still later, and that it has been known in Uganda only within the last five or six centuries. In China iron is mentioned in 400 B.C. Bronze weapons were employed in China until 100 A.D. and in Japan until 700 A.D. According to a Mr. Ridgway, who has investigated this subject, the metallurgy of iron must have originated in Central Europe, especially in Noricum, which approximately represented modern Austria and Bavaria. Only at Hallstatt and in Bosnia and Transylvania, from which countries the Achaeans and Dorians are supposed to have migrated to Greece, are found evidences of a gradual introduction of iron, at first as an ornament applied to the bronze, which it ultimately displaced. Everywhere else iron was introduced suddenly, a fact which implies a foreign origin. Meteoric iron was known in Egypt in remote antiquity, but no doubt it was worked as flints were worked, by cutting or chipping, and was not smelted. In others words, it was the metallurgy, not the knowledge of iron, that originated in Central Europe.

Dr. Arthur Goodspeed, assistant professor of physics in the university, Philadelphia, Pa., took a successful picture the other evening, by means of the X-ray process, of the stomach of a man commonly known in this city as the "Ostrich Boy," who is famous for his ability to swallow nails and pieces of metal without injury. This man requested Dr. Goodspeed to make the experiment, and the doctor was only too glad to do so. The "Ostrich Boy" ate a hearty supper last evening of nails, tacks, and screws, duplicates of which were laid aside for reference. Then he submitted to the ordeal of having a picture of his interior taken. Dr. Goodspeed with his improved apparatus made an exposure, and the plate was successfully developed. the positions of the pieces of metal showing plainly. Prof. Goodspeed has recently taken several other interesting pictures by the Roentgen process; and has reduced the time necessary for the exposure to the extremely short period of two minutes.

JOKES AND JESTS.

Teacher—Plato, what is a farm? Plato—A farm, sir, is a body of land entirely surrounded by a fence.

Pat—Have yez a letter for me? The Postmaster—What name? Pat—Any name yez loike, so long as I get me letter, shure!

Alice—Why did she refuse him—because they were of different faiths? Clara—Yes. Alice—And he refused to change his religion? Clara—Oh, no; his wheel.

City Nephew—I've got a couple of tickets for to-morrow night; but all the orchestra seats had been sold. Uncle Josh—Do tell! Will the orchestra have to stand up?

Little Bess (so much accustomed to see baby creep that she thinks it is his normal mode of traveling)—Oh, mamma, come quick! Baby is standing on his hind legs!

"Old Gotrox said he got rich by saving what other people threw away." "Oh, yes. Did he also state that anything not nailed down he considered as thrown away?"

Dyspepsia Specialist (irritably)—But, madam, you must chew your food. What were your teeth given you for? Female Patient (calmly)—They weren't given to me; I bought 'em.

"Poor Heidsix has lost his job in the post-office." "You don't say!" "But I do say. Some crank mailed a letter addressed simply to 'The Greatest Man in America,' and instead of sending it to his chief, Heidsix sent it to Bob Fitzsimmons."

"Suppose, Bobbie, that another boy should strike your right cheek," asked the Sunday-school teacher, "what would you do?" "Give him the other cheek to strike," said Bobbie. "That's right," said the teacher. "Yessum," said Bobbie; "and if he struck that I'd paralyze him."

Brown—I hear Jones and Smith are no longer friends. Sprocketts—Yes; Smith called on Mrs. Jones while Jones was out of town. Brown—But there was nothing wrong about that. Sprocketts—There wasn't, eh? He wanted to borrow Jones' bicycle to learn on, and she let him have it.

His Own Avenger

By Horace Appleton

The following story occurred during the first year I was in the service.

I had been sent on the tracks of a gang of coiners. Information had been received that their headquarters were located in a small town where they carried on their business through agents in the city.

To endeavor to intercept these agents and make a raid upon the main gang was the object of my mission.

In vain I tried to find some one whom I thought likely to be connected with the gang, with one exception.

This was a young man named Harold Grant.

I learned that he was the only son of a merchant who had died about two years before, leaving him his sole heir.

Perusing the will, however, I found that the legacy was subject to an annuity of two hundred a year, payable to a person named in a private letter to the son.

Here was something mysterious, at any rate.

I found out the family lawyer, and calling upon him, made him acquainted with my professional capacity, and asked him to give me an explanation of the mysterious clause in the will.

"I do not know," he said, slowly, at length, "that it will be betraying any professional confidence, and I will tell you all I know."

Then he told me the following story:

"Harold Grant was one of two twin brothers.

"The personal resemblances between them was striking.

"Their natures, however, were wholly different, and while Harold's was warm, generous and affectionate, that of Henry, his brother, was cold, selfish, and utterly depraved.

"The knowledge of his son's dissipation nearly broke the old man's heart, but the youth's evil career culminated, when a drunken quarrel he killed a man.

"He was forced to fly for his life, and from that day until his death his father had never heard of him.

"And that mysterious clause in the will," the lawyer concluded, "was inserted, in case the prodigal should ever return home repentant, that he might be safe from want and have a fair start in a new and honest career."

Thanking the lawyer for his courtesy, I was about leaving the office, when a new thought struck me.

Turning, I asked him if he would have any objection to giving me a letter of introduction to Mr. Harold Grant.

He assured me he was only too willing to oblige me, and a few minutes later, with the note in my pocket-book, I again left the office.

An hour or so later I called upon Mr. Grant.

He received me with the utmost cordiality, and I mentioned my business.

"And you have found no clew yet to work upon?" he asked.

"None," I answered. "I am completely at fault."

"And I think you will remain so," he said. "Men who play

speculative games generally take precautions."

The tone of his voice was almost taunting.

"You have my best wishes for your success at any rate," he said. "If I can assist you in any way you may depend upon me."

I took my leave and walked slowly to where I was

A new idea had come.

Suppose that a great mistake had been made in the characters of the two brothers, and while this one was the villain, the fugitive was more sinned against than sinning.

Pondering over this idea, but at the same time keeping my eyes well open that same evening, I struck something that promised to be a clew.

In order to work it up I had occasion to shadow a man in the suburbs of the town.

Perhaps suspecting he was being tracked, my man quickened his pace to almost a run, when in rapidly turning a corner I ran against another man with his coat buttoned close around his throat and a wide hat slouched over his eyes.

The force of the shock was sufficient to make me pause for a moment or two.

Apologizing, I was about to pass on when I caught a glance of the features beneath the slouch hat and instantly changed my intention.

"Good-evening, Mr. Grant," I said.

No look of recognition came into his face as he answered, almost rudely:

"I do not know you."

"Not know me?" I repeated. "Your memory must have been very treacherous this afternoon."

A new light seemed to break upon him, and his hand went up to his forehead, as if trying to remember something.

"Ah!" he said. "I had forgotten. "And you—you are—"

He paused interrogatively.

I looked at him in wonder.

Was he intoxicated?

I did not think so, but laid my hand upon his arm, and said, sternly:

"I am a detective!"

A look more of satisfaction than dismay crossed his face at the words, and he grasped my hand warmly.

"You are the very man I need," he said. "Come with me."

Perplexed at his strange manner, I followed him to a small hotel near by.

Ordering a private room he called for pen and paper, and when we were again alone addressed me.

"You addressed me as Mr. Grant in the street just now," he said. "I presume you mean Mr. Harold Grant?"

I answered in the affirmative.

"I am not he, but I wish to see him. Write him saying you have discovered something of importance, and must see him here immediately."

I hesitated a few seconds before complying.

At last, with a sudden resolve, I did as I was desired.

My strange companion read it with a nod of approbation, and sending for a messenger, had it dispatched at once.

Then returning, he seated himself at the table opposite me.

"You may think my proceedings strange," he said, "but wait for an hour or so and you will see it is the only way to act. I must not see this man when he first arrives. When he comes accuse him of being the chief of the gang of coiners you are after, and then leave the rest to me."

He passed out of the room into a connecting chamber as he spoke, and I was left alone.

What did it mean?

Was he a madman, or was it only some cunningly-devised trap to lure me to my death?

I could not tell, but as the last thought crossed my mind I examined the charges in my pistol, determined that if treachery was intended they should find me ready.

More than a quarter of an hour passed.

To the mystery I could find no solution, but my mind was

made up to follow the advice of my strange companion whatever the consequences might be, when a knock came at the door, and the next moment the man for whom I had written entered the room.

His face was pallid, except for a hectic flush on either cheek, and his eyes were full of a fearful anxiety like that of the gambler as he watches the cast of the die upon which he has staked his all.

"You sent for me," he said, in a husky voice. "Have you discovered—"

"Yes," I interrupted, "I have found the coiners. I am sorry to say you are implicated, and you are my prisoner."

The hectic flush upon his cheeks faded, leaving his face ashen as that of a corpse, while his hand stole toward the breast-pocket of his coat; but I had been before him, and he was already covered with the muzzle of my pistol.

"None of that," I said. "Keep your hands down or I fire."

He at once let his hands fall to his side, but with a great effort, partially recovering his self-control, he said, with an attempt at bravado:

"You must be mad. Who dares accuse me?"

"I do!"

As the last words were spoken, the door communicating with the adjoining chamber had been opened and the figure of my strange companion of a quarter on an hour before stood upon the threshold.

"I, Harold Grant, whose name you have assumed, accuse you. I am your brother whom you tried to murder for the sake of his wealth."

The eyes of the man, covered by my revolver, seemed fairly starting from his head, and his lips trembled so that he could hardly shape them into words.

"Harold!" he gasped, "has the grave given up its dead?"

"No," the figure on the threshold answered; "I was not dead. Your murderous blow was not fatal. I recovered, and now, though you were twenty times my brother, our father's broken-heart and my own wrongs shall lead you to a prison."

The denounced man's face was livid, his form trembled, he seemed like one suddenly seized with a paralytic fit.

"When, more than ten years ago," the accuser went on, "you left our home, your hands red with blood, our father forgave you. In his will, as you know, he left provision for you, should you ever return repentant. You did return, and I religiously carried out our father's wishes and was happy in doing so. What was your gratitude? You stabbed me when I was asleep, and thinking the blow had been fatal, you usurped my place and name."

Still the listener was silent, and his brother went on:

"I was not dead. Your murderous deed was seen, and dragged from the shallow grave in which you cast me, I recovered to become my own avenger. Henry Grant, you have played a desperate game, but you have lost."

A wild, unearthly gasping cry interrupted further words, and with a ghastly rattle in his throat the guilty man fell downward, to the floor.

Crossing to where he lay we raised him and tried to restore him to consciousness, but he was dead.

The shock, acting upon some organic disease of the heart, had killed him.

The injured brother, the real Harold Grant, took possession of his property again, and thanks to his assistance, I was able to capture the gang I was after, and received much official praise in consequence.

The story, when it was made public, created quite a sensation, but it gradually died out as everything will in time, and now it belongs to the past.

TRUE STORIES.

There was trouble in the menagerie recently. It seems that the large black monkey had got out some way or other and climbed up in front of the big tank in the aquarium and called the seal a "blasted furriner," and when the seal was tortured by calling him a "Senegambian nut cracker," the monkey reached in over the glass and pulled a bald spot in her seal skin sack, and then there was a row.

"Put up your flippers and lead at him," shouted the leopard encouragingly to the seal.

"Here, you mustn't bite, scratch, nor pull hair," said the bear to the monkey. "Fight fair."

And when that rule was applauded and approved by the crowd, the monkey quit fighting and sat down and cried, and said that just barred him clear out.

"Clear in, you mean," interrupted the zebra, "and besides you're not barred out half so much as I am."

"And everybody was down on him, anyhow," the monkey sobbed on, "and—"

"There's more down on me than there is on you," said the swan, "and I don't snivel about it, you Italian refugee."

"I can lick the biggest seal in this menagerie," wailed the friendless monkey; to which the seal scornfully replied that he couldn't lick a postage stamp, and at this taunt monkey broke out afresh, and the menagerie reviled encouraged him by turns.

"Why don't you bristle up?" the wild boar asked him.

"Yes," shouted the giraffe, "hold your head up."

"And throw out your chest and have some style about you," yelled the peacock.

"And hump yourself and have a little backbone," said the camel.

"And stand up for your rights," said the kangaroo.

"And what will you do for his lefts, you club-tailed parabola?" said the elephant, who had just come into the tent, and everybody could see that he was in a bad humor.

He turned on the weeping monkey.

"Get into your cage this minute, you son of a cocoanut, I'll hit you such a swipe with this Saratoga that you'll think a whole baggage car has run over you."

The animals were all perfectly quiet, wondering what had happened and what was coming next. The elephant glared around at the cages and then shook his head savagely.

"I'd give a whole bale of hay," he said, after a while, "I knew which one of you living curiosities and zoologic wonders sent me that bottle of antifat."

And then, children, one wild whoop of laughter went from all the cages, which culminated in shrieks of delight when the enraged elephant sucked all the water out of the seal's tank and spurted it all over the monkeys. It was the worst rain they ever had in the menagerie, and it was a lucky thing somebody didn't get killed. As it was, the little brown monkey with the gray face had spasms all night, all three of the owls had to sit up with him, and they were so sleepy next day they didn't have to show.

When frightened a quail will always hold his head up. This fact is always taken advantage of by trappers, and vast numbers of them are caught by the simplest of means. All that is necessary is a box with an opening through which the birds can pass, trail them into the box with corn, and when once in the box they will never get out, because the hole being at the bottom, they will look up and never see. Another characteristic of quails assists the trappers; they will all follow their leader, and when he enters the box the entire covey is caught.

THE INK BLOT JOKER.



CACHOO OR SNEEZING POWDEE.—The greatest fun-maker of them all. A small amount of this powder, when blown in a room, will cause everyone to sneeze without anyone knowing where it comes from. It is very light, will float in the air for some time, and penetrate every nook and corner of a room. It is perfectly harmless. Cachoo is put up in bottles, and one bottle contains enough to be used from 10 to 15 times.

Price by mail, 10c. each; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



CHANGING MONEY TRICK BOX.—With this trick box you can make money change from a penny into a dime or vice-versa. Also make dimes appear and disappear at your command. Price by mail, postpaid, 10c. each.

FRANK ROBINSON,
311 W. 44th St., N. Y.



NEW SURPRISE NOVELTY.—Foxy Grandpa, Mr. Pee-wee and other comical faces artistically colored, to which is attached a long rubber tube, connected with a rubber ball, which can be filled with water, the rubber ball being carried in the pocket, a slight pressure on the bulb causes a long stream, the result can easily be seen:

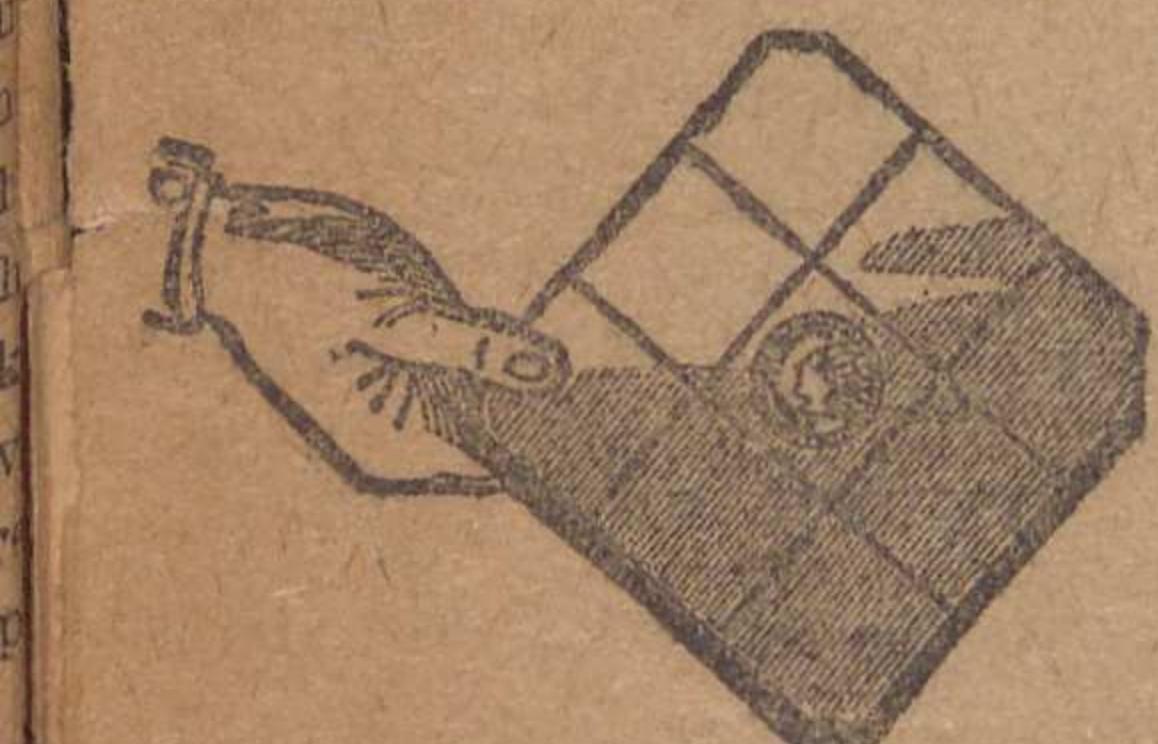
Price, 15c., postpaid.

WOLFF
NOVELTY CO.,
29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



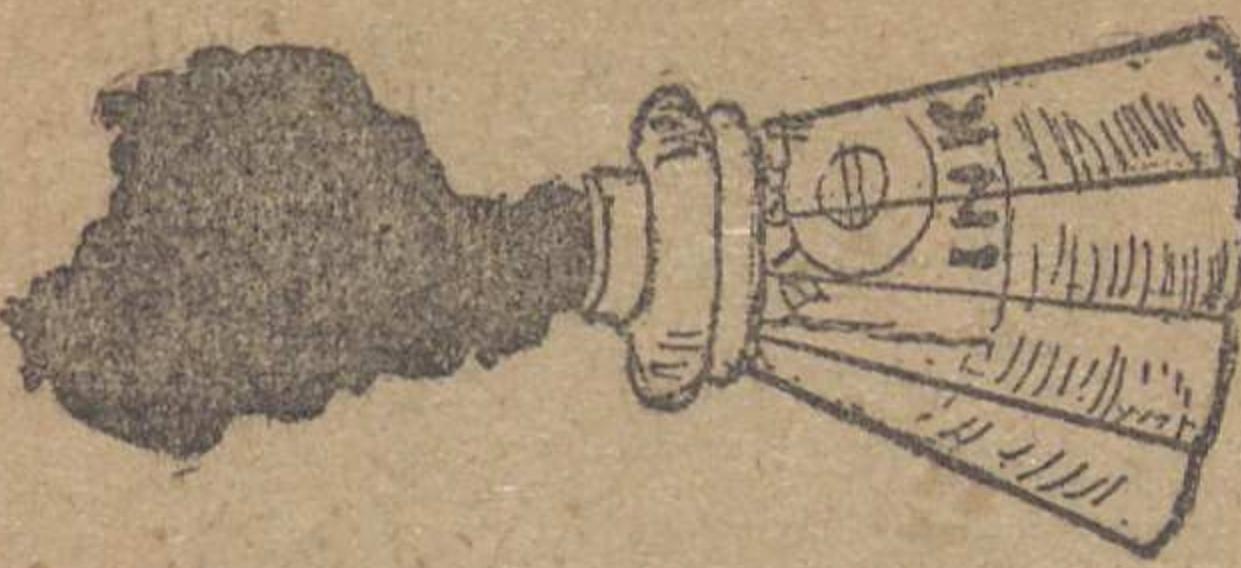
THE FOUNTAIN RING.—A handsome ring connected with a rubber ball which is concealed in the palm of the hand. A gentle squeeze forces water or cologne in the face of the victim while he is examining it. The ball can be instantly filled by immersing ring in water same as a fountain pen filler. Price by mail, postpaid, 12c. each.

FRANK ROBINSON,
311 WEST 44TH ST., N. Y.



THE GREAT PANEL TRICK.—This remarkable invention consists of a simple, plain wooden panel, octagonal in shape, with no signs of a hole about it. The panel can be examined by any one; you then ask for a penny or a coin and place it on the center of the panel; then at the word of command the coin immediately disappears. You do not change the position of the panel at any time, but hold it in full view of the audience all the time. The coin does not pass into the performer's hand, nor into his sleeve; neither does it drop upon the floor. The second illustration is as wonderful as the first; at the word of command the coin again appears upon the center of the panel as mysteriously as it went. We send full printed instructions by the aid of which any one can perform the trick, to the astonishment and delight of their friends. Price, 15c., 2 for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



Fool Your Friends.—The greatest novelty of the age! Have a joke which makes everybody laugh. More fun than any other novelty that has been shown in years. Place it on a desk, tablecloth, or any piece of furniture, as shown in the above cut, near some valuable papers or on fine wearing apparel. Watch the result! Oh, Gee! Price, 15 cents each, postpaid.

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Price 10 Cents

Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickelated brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied.



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MAGIC MIRROR

Fat and Lean Funny Faces



By looking in these mirrors upright, your features become narrow and elongated. Look into it sideways and your phiz broadens out in the most comical manner. Size 3 1/4 x 2 1/4 inches, in a handsome imitation morocco case.

Price 10 cents each, postpaid

FRANK ROBINSON,
311 W. 44th St., N. Y.



ITALIAN TRANSFER.—With this remarkable invention any one can transfer pictures or engravings from newspapers or books, and make perfect copies of butterfly and moth wings for scrap books. It is the dry transfer process, cleanly, handy and reliable, and the results secured will astonish you. Transfer is a gelatinous substance put up in cakes, one of which is enclosed with a wooden rubber and full directions for producing pictures, it requiring but a few moments to make the transfer. Any picture in the newspapers can be speedily reproduced in your album, or elsewhere, a perfect copy being made, and several copies can be made from the same picture. Butterfly and moth wings can also be pictured, all the beautiful colors and markings on the wings being transferred, and thus an interesting and instructive collection of insect forms can be made and permanently preserved in a scrap book. Both young and old will take delight in using Transfer, and the price is so low that all can afford to have this new process at command. Price only 10c., 3 for 25c.; one dozen, 75c., by mail postpaid.

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TELL NAMES BY MAGIC

THE MOST PUZZLING NOVELTY OUT

It consists of 5 cards, with which you can tell anybody's name without knowing what the name is before you commence. Price 10 cents a pack, postpaid.

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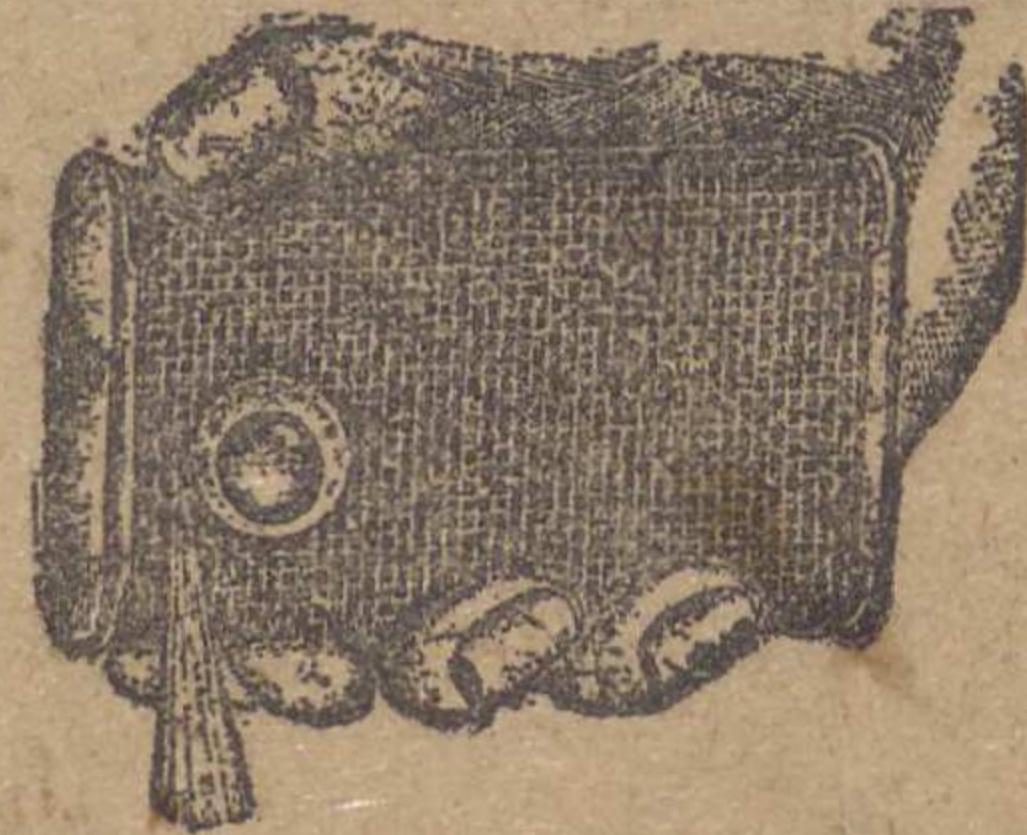
CARTER AEROPLANE No. 1

Will fly on a horizontal line 150 feet! Can be flown in the house, and will not injure itself nor anything in the room. The most perfect little aeroplane made.

The motive power is furnished by twisted rubber bands contained within the tubular body of the machine. It is actuated by a propeller at each end revolving in opposite directions. Variation in height may be obtained by moving the planes and the balance weight. It can be made to fly either to the right or the left by moving the balance sidewise before it is released for flight.

PRICE 35 Cents Each. Delivered.

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POCKET FLASH LIGHT SQUIRT.—Made of decorated enameled metal, representing an exact flash pocket lighter; by pressing button instead of bull's eye, electrically lighting up, a stream of water is ejected into the face of the spectator; an entirely new and amusing novelty.

Price, 25c., postpaid.

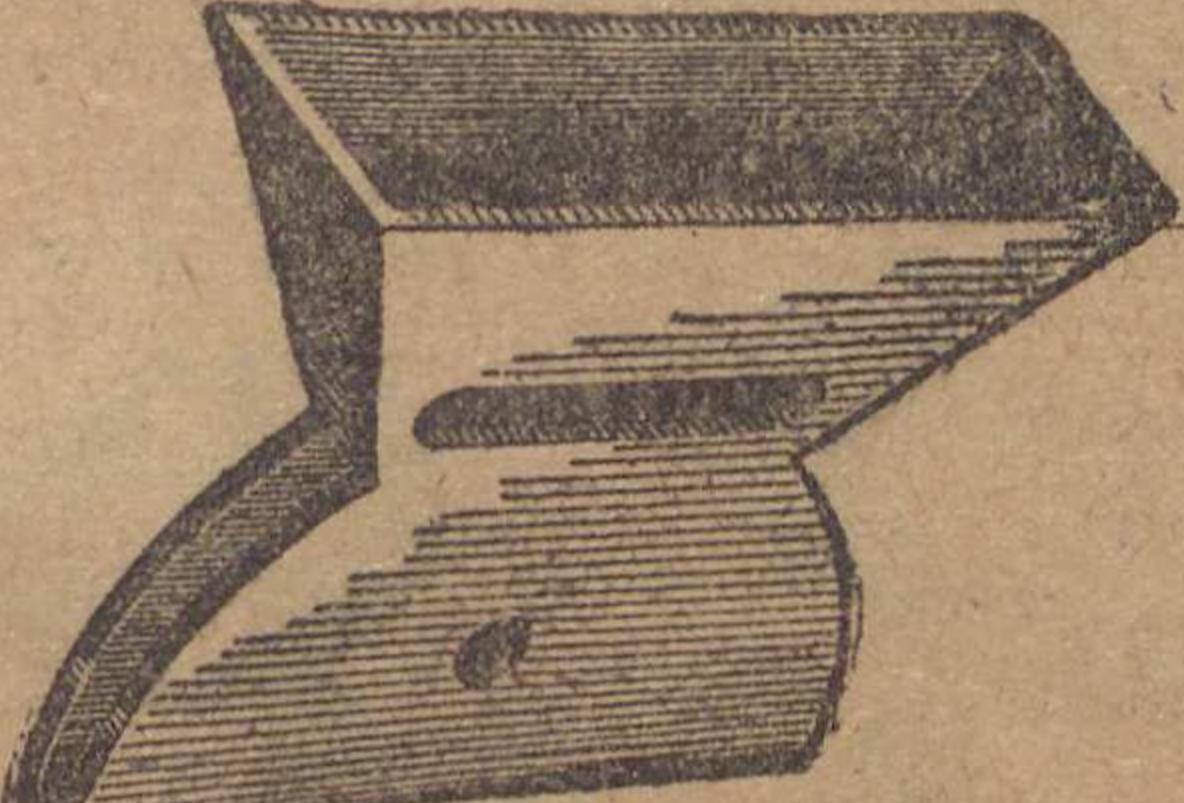
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HELLO! HELLO! THE LITTLE GEM TELEPHONE.



THE LITTLE GEM TELEPHONE.—The transmitter in this telephone is made from the best imported parchment; with ordinary use will last a long time; can be made in any length by adding cord; the only real telephone for the money; each one put up in a neat box; fully illustrated, with full directions how to use them. Price, 12c., postpaid.

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THE FLUTOPHONE.—A new musical instrument, producing the sweetest dulcet tones of the flute. The upper part of the instrument is placed in the mouth, the lips covering the openings in the centre. Then by blowing gently upon it you can play any tune desired as easily as whistling. But little practice is required to become a finished player. It is made entirely of metal, and will last a lifetime. We send full instructions with each instrument.

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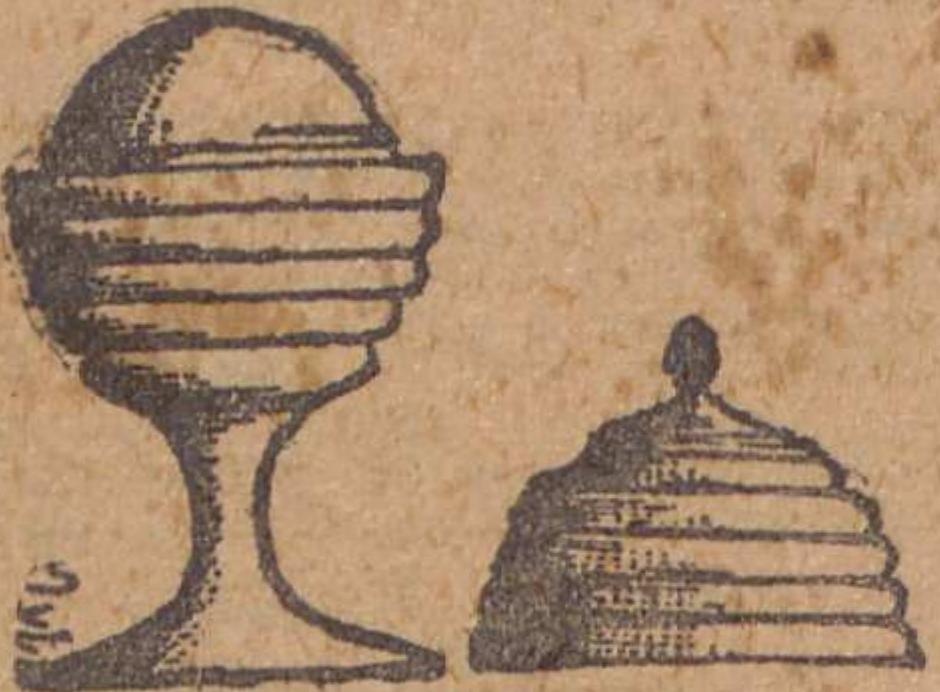
The Bottle Imp.—The peculiarity of this little bottle is that it cannot be made to lie down, and yet by simply passing the hand over it, the performer causes it to do so. This trick affords great amusement, and is of convenient size to carry about. Price, 10c
Chas. Unger, 316 Union St., Jersey City, N. J.

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A Brand-New Trick, Just Out.—Puzzling, Mystifying and Perplexing. A metal ring is handed around for examination, and is found to be solid, unbroken japanned iron. A cane, a pencil or a string is held tightly at each end by a spectator. The performer lightly taps the cane with the ring, and the ring suddenly is seen to be encircling the cane. How did the ring pass the spectator's two hands and get on the cane? The most mystifying trick ever invented. Others charge 75 cents for this trick; but our price, including instructions, is 12 cents.

FRANK ROBINSON, 311 W. 44th St., N. Y.



TRICK CUP.—Made of natural white wood turned with two compartments; a round black ball fits on those compartments; the other is a stationary ball. By a little practice you make the black ball vanish; a great trick novelty and immense seller.

Price, 10c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



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False-Faces Beaten a Mile

There are 7 in a set and represent an Indian, a Japanese girl, a clown, Foxy Grandpa, an English Johnny Atkins and an Automobilist. Beautifully lithographed in handsome colors on a durable quality of cardboard. They have eyeholes and string perforations. Price 6 cents each, or the full set of 7 for 25 cents, postpaid.

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425 W. 56th St., N. Y.



MAGIC PUZZLE KEYS.—Two keys interlocked in such a manner it seems impossible to separate them, but when learned it is easily done. Price 6c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



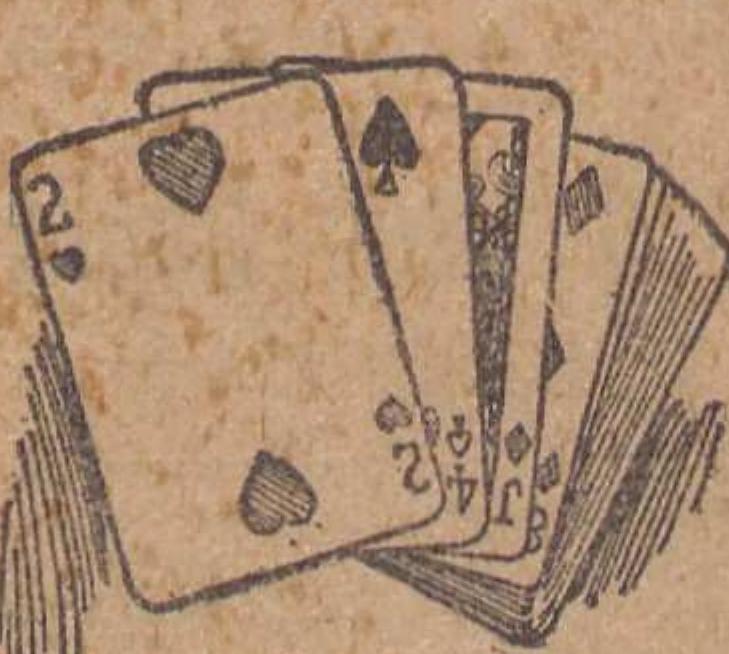
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Positively no sleight-of-hand. The whole trick is in the cards. Price by mail, postpaid, 35c.

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WIZARD'S PACK OF TRICK CARDS.—A full pack of 53 cards, but by the aid of the instructions given, anyone can perform the most wonderful tricks. Many of the feats exhibited are truly marvelous and astonish, and amuse a whole audience.

SLICK TRICK PENCIL

THIS ONE IS A HUMMER

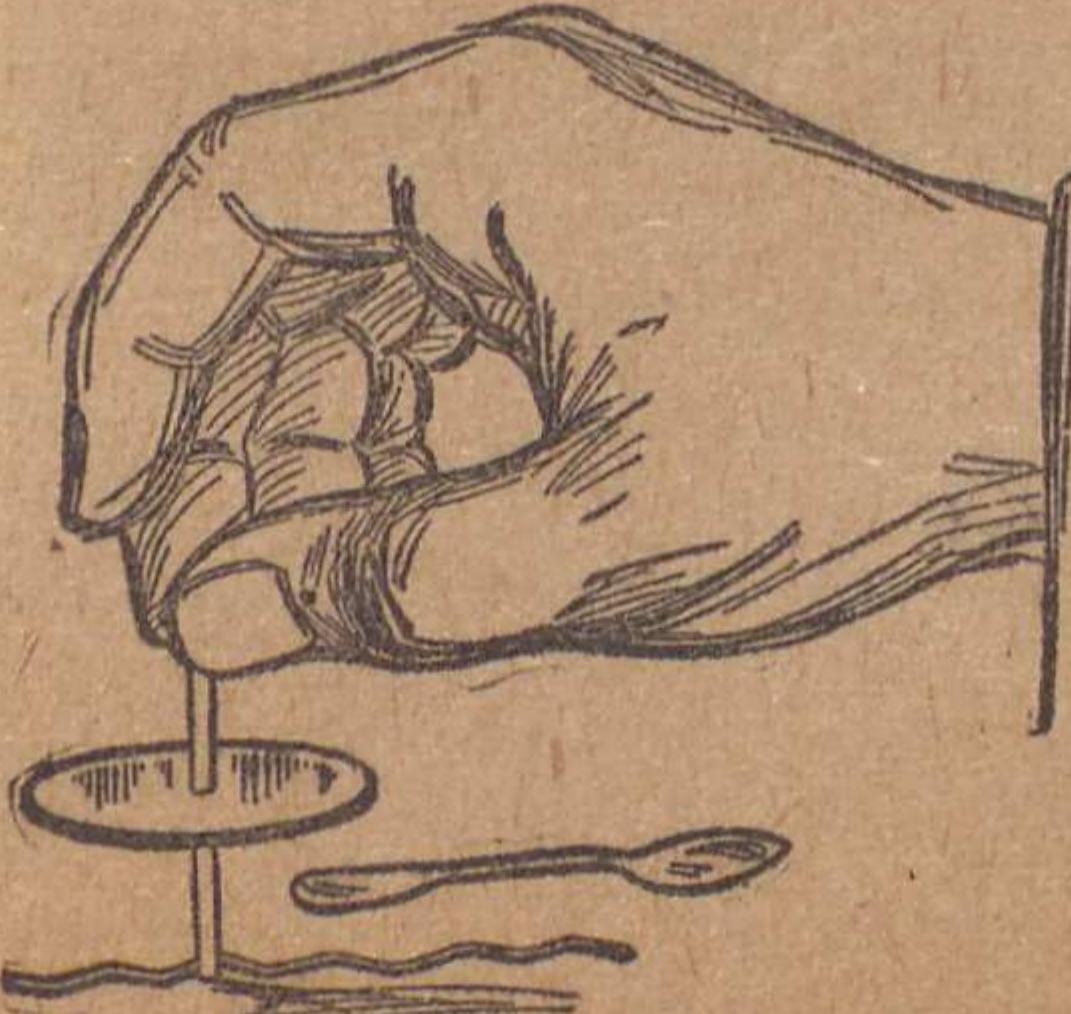
It is to all appearances an ordinary, but expensive lead pencil, with nickel trimmings. If your friend wants your pencil for a moment, hand it to him. When he attempts to write with it, the end instantly turns up, and he cannot write a stroke with it.

Price 10 cents postpaid

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PRICE 5 CENTS, POSTPAID



A handsome metal, highly magnetized toy. A horseshoe, and a spiral wire furnished with each top. When spun next to the wires, they make the most surprising movements. You can make wires of different shapes and get the most peculiar effects.

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